MAYFAIR

ENTERTAINMENT FOR MEN

30p Vol. 6 No. 6

INCORPORATING King

That nice TIMES nude in a naughty film

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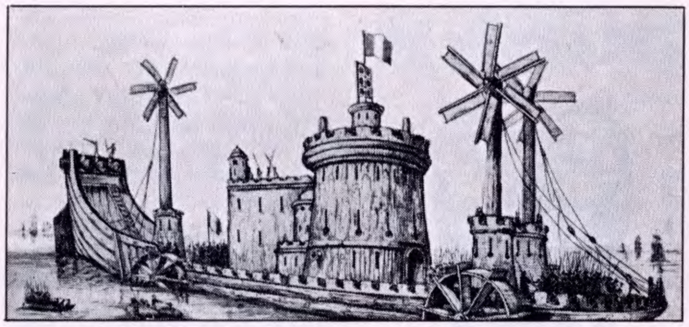

NAPOLEONIC FLOATING FORTRESS: P28

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CONTENTS

page

SPECIAL FEATURES

Invasion: Boney phobia and the weird machines of war *Ian Penn* 28

Establishment nude: *The Times* naked ad-girl in a bare faced film 52

GIRLS

Rosalind: Our mouth watering drinks dolly 20

Perfect Paula: The most tempting temp 37

Celia: Slowly stripping when she thinks no-one is watching 61

HUMOUR

Membermanship: Female strangers spyed through hallowed club portals *Roy Raymonde* 11

Not so bright lights: Sex and survival in the bed-sit area *Brian O'Hanlon* 32

Girls who get wet: Ronald Cobb draws on a male predilection *Edward Knox* 48

INFORMERS

Quest: Girls on holiday part one 67

Motoring: Those early burly days of motor racing *William Boddy* 76

FICTION

Highlife Sentimentale: White girl, black girl, where's the balance? *Michael Kelly* 24

FASHION

Wool's Casual Pull: Knitwear to get up and go *Erica Crome* 44

READER SERVICES

Letters/page 8 **Back numbers**/page 71 **Book Society**/page 16 **Film Society**/page 64 **Subscription details**/page 74

CRITICS

Books: *Arthur Pottersman* **Films:** *David Quinlan* **Wine:** *Charles Fforde* **Clubs:** *Kenneth Dowd* **Toiletries:** *Conrad Pearce* 14

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The Family Cancer Plan . . .

Photo: Paul Ostrer

Costs less than the price
of a cup of tea a day!*

Yet it provides individual cash benefits of up to £3000 enabling you to meet continuing family expenses should you, or any member of your family, be hospitalised with cancer.

Send coupon for details to Family Cancer Plan Ltd., 31 Lime Street, London, EC3.

Name ....

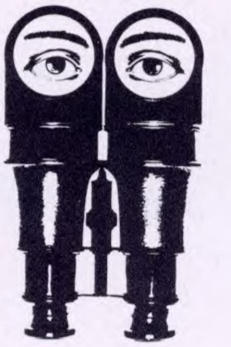
Address ....

....

Phone.......... MJN.

**Based on the cost of a Family Cancer Plan for a husband, wife and two children under 18.*

SCENE



Mayfair Magazine,
95A Chancery Lane,
London WC2A 1DZ

Way back in December we used this column to say that the mini was not dead. Many people thought us mad. A dress designer from King's Lynn wrote to say we were indulging in the wistful thinking of the deprived, and only the depraved needed the stiffening sight (morale-wise) of naked limbs in daily doses. Us and all men . . . At best we were accused of self deception.

We stayed by our principles: the mini would not die.

Now the London Evening Standard swings to our side. In one of their more interesting opinion polls they find majority verdicts from both men and women in favour of mini-skirts, and majority verdicts in the belief that the mini is back in favour. Way, way down the poll came two museum pieces. Garments called the maxi and the midi. What were they, Daddy? Those my child were a disruptive device from the rag trade to rob mankind of one of its senses: thighsight.

'I may not like much about art, but I like what I know.' The philistine's classic all-purpose phrase thus adjusted could well serve to explain the itchy fascination of a collection of paintings on show in London recently.

They're by Eddie Wolfram, manager of pop singer Millie who graced the pages of Mayfair not so long back (Vol. 5, No. 7).

Centred on the twin theme of sex and communication, the paintings bulge with front-views, back-views, side-views and kinky cross-sections of the female anatomy.

Whatever else they may be, they're certainly eye-catching. They have that ability to turn heads and make you ask yourself whether you saw aright what you *thought* you saw the first time – in much the same way as those swimwear ads on the Underground escalator.

Perhaps because of this affinity with the flashing images of the subterranean rush-hour, Wolfram's paintings have a ghostly familiarity, despite their usually bizarre juxtaposition of objects. And this familiarity is their strongest quality.

Wolfram himself, we should mention, is hardly in the philistine mould. Aside from his involvement in the pop industry, he writes and designs for TV and is currently a lecturer at Ravensbourne School of Television and Film Production.

Incidentally, one or two of his paintings are based on photographs that have appeared in our own pages.

While on the subject of advertisements in the London Underground – and, for that matter, art – the strangest we've seen recently was on the escalator at Notting Hill Gate. It consisted simply of a very phallic black-and-white photograph of Cleopatra's Needle, with the legend: 'This is a Non-Art Object'. The only other clue as to the poster's origin was a line saying, 'The Non-Art Project'.

The mystery advertisement certainly didn't appear to be a bit of guerrilla bill-sticking – it was all very officially under glass in a display unit.

Any explanations?

Well, what about that phantom stripper in Berkshire? Does she exist or doesn't she?

Just in case you haven't heard the story: A pretty young lady has been cavorting now and again by the roadsides around the Twyford area of Berkshire either scantily clad or completely starkers. To the delight (in most cases) of passing motorists.

Several claim to have seen her. Accounts, as they say, vary. Some have seen her wearing flesh-coloured bra and G-string. Others: just bra and coat. And one gentleman insists he sighted her clad in nothing but a pair of long, black rainproof boots, carrying a red umbrella.

Most of the incidents are said to have occurred at night. But, surprisingly, Thames Valley police say: 'Our legal department think it unlikely she could be guilty of a breach of the peace, not even if she appeared like this in daylight.'

The case is reminiscent of a similar spate of sightings in East Anglia a couple of years ago, which provoked a correspondence in Mayfair. But, frankly, some people felt the lady did not in fact exist – such was the widely varying nature of the reports. It could all just have been a weird folk myth. Remember the Surrey puma?

Not that it can't happen, mind you – a young lady unclothed by the roadside. Look at what happened to 18-year-old student Julie Wood in the centre of Norwich recently. When a motorist whisked off from the traffic lights he whisked off Julie's black midi-skirt as well, with his front bumper.

'There I was left in my black boots, tights and roll-neck sweater, with a crowd of people pointing at me.' So, girls, mind how you cross the road.

When it comes to bottoms, cheekiness can still get the cold shoulder. Take the draughty case of dolly Kate Howard, for a start.

Miss Howard appeared in an ad for Lovable Bras. And very fetching she looked too: she posed without panties.

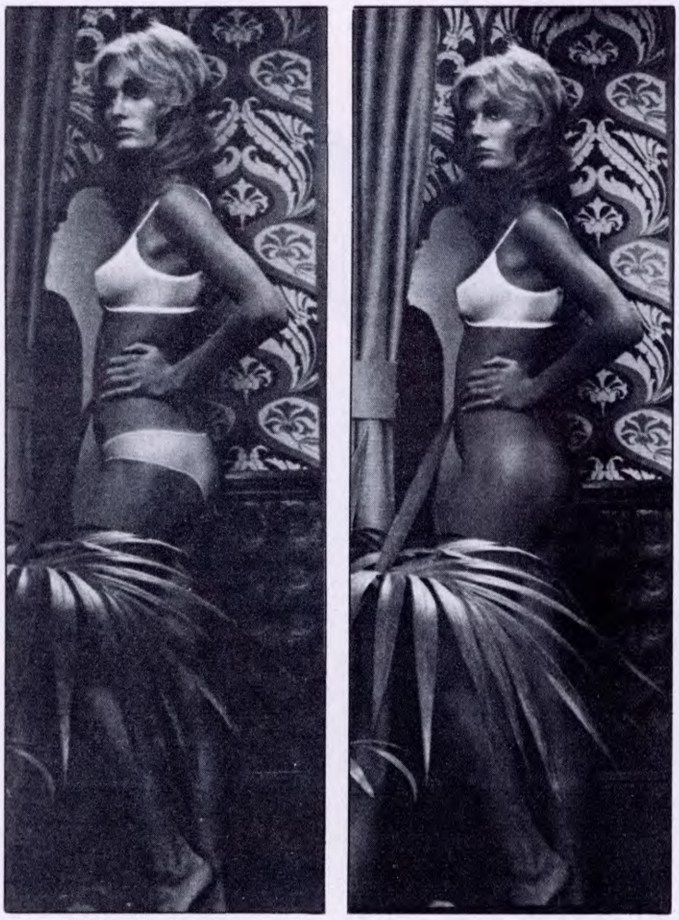
Therein lay the snag. Two women's magazines duly noted the lack of flimsies and didn't flinch: the ad appeared, cheeks and all. But the third, *Woman's Own*, felt it was just too much – or rather, too little. If Kate's bottom was displayed, then the ad wouldn't be, insisted *Woman's Own* editor Jane Reed. 'We felt it would offend readers,' she explained.

So overnight the ad people – never ones to offend a lady – slipped onto Kate a pair of painted panties.

The offending advertisement showed three girls in a typical changing room.

Miss Reed explained: 'I think they took the knickers off just for effect – we have to decide when nudes are used for sheer titillation.'

Strange thing is that a spot poll among chaps at the Mayfair offices revealed that at least half of them thought the dolly more titillating *with* panties than without.



Spot the difference: Kate with and without her airbrushed panties

It's here at last
The
MAYFAIR
1972 Calendar

You made us do it. You kept on at us until we produced our own magnificent Mayfair calendar. Now you can have our gorgeous Mayfair girls around the whole year to brighten up your office, factory, garage or executive suite. Twelve leaves printed in full colour carrying your company's advertising message – an ideal gift for business associates. Simply complete the coupon and send to: **Bemrose and Mansell, Midland Place, Derby.** That'll ensure a call from our representative. Minimum quantity is 25. NB Mayfair readers. Don't panic. The retail edition will be available in single copies later in the year.

It had to come

Mayfair Calendar

Name ....

Company ....

Address ....

.... M66

If you don't wish to cut your magazine send the details on a plain sheet of paper.

LETTERS

This is where we invite you to add to the controversy and the anecdote of Mayfair. Write to 'Letters', Mayfair Magazine, 95A Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1DZ

Notwithstanding your correspondents' desire for an improved universal method of breast, buttock and waist measurement (Vol. 6 Nos. 1 and 3), have they considered what utter confusion the metric system, when and if implemented in this country, will bring.

Happily, I notice Leena Skoog provided us with the rough metric equivalent.

But imagine the rush for the bookstalls the first time you bill 'the girl with the 98 bust.' So gentlemen before rushing into BSH and BUM get your decimal converters ready. And may you convert many.

K.L.H., Reading (full name and address withheld on request)

Your feature on the attraction of traction engines (Vol. 6 No. 4) brought back parts of my life I thought I would never have cause to remember. You mentioned accidents involving traction engines – but none can have been as hair raising as my own.

We were hauling a threshing drum and elevator on a hill with our Burrell engine. There were several hands sitting on the back. Suddenly one of them noticed the driving pin on the left hand wheel was protruding. We jumped off, leaving the engine to the driver. One of the hands was trying to push the pin back in, running alongside the engine. With the wheels no longer mated to the engine it began to run away down the hill. The driver steered it into a bank and the whole lot turned over just as he flung himself clear.

The sight of that great green monster smashing into the bank and turning over was like watching some massive all-powerful animal in its death throes – an awesome and frightening sight.

F.H.C., Horsham, Sussex (full name and address withheld)

One of your girls is in the news again. Leena Skoog, your February (Vol. 6 No. 2) centre girl was pictured recently in the Daily Mirror.

Apparently television producers want her for programmes but can't use her because she's finding difficulty getting a work permit.

I'd have thought if she just wandered round to the ministry involved and if they had any male hormones in their systems, they'd give her a permit on the spot.

P.K. Fellowes, Blackheath Road, SE10

Taboo Topic stop London's chronic shortage of single-girls stop Up-to-date population figures from Britain's registrar-General disclose zooming surplus of eligible bachelors in all age groups up to 44 stop Amongst the 28-year-olds bachelors outnumber single-girls by a ratio of nearly two to one stop English demographic experts anticipate a continuing surplus of over one and a half million young unmarried men in Great Britain stop.

Do-it-yourself postcard telegram from anonymous expert in Paddington, London W2

Edward Knox swears he is not responsible for either the postcard or the shortage.

At risk of being thought obscure I would like to introduce into your hallowed pages the ultimate method of figure measurement, defined by me only after hours of painstaking toil.

It is: The Coefficient of Restitution or COR.

Roughly translated this is the time taken for a female body (or part of) to resume its shape or position by elasticity (sic). For example the length of time it takes a young lady to spring back into shape when you give her a bear hug or the time taken for a slapped lower cheek to resume its former position. The same applies to breasts, tightly laced corsets and high lift bras.

This obviously explains why certain well endowed young ladies have elicited that well known masculine response, 'Cor.' or 'I say, chaps, what a Coefficient.'

L.G., Burnham Beeches, Bucks (full name and address withheld on request)

Sad to say, our school dances were never so fraught with pure joy as those that Michael Priestley remembers in Vol. 6 No. 3, but then I was never on the organising party.

I was a boarder at the school, an all-male preserve. Apart from parental visits and odd afternoons in town we were allowed but one sop per month to combat our social boredom. Every last Friday evening of the month we held our Film Society meeting in the hall. But best of all, the girls from the boarding college for the daughters of gentlefolk way across the town, were always invited, and presumably being as sex starved as we were, they came to our Society without much persuasion.

It was at a Society meeting, while watching a film about the manufacture of papier-mache string puppets, that I felt my first ever naked female breast.

I was in the back row, acting as door keeper and sitting by a girl I had met on several previous occasions.

After closing the door as the lights went out I fumbled back to my seat and reaching for the back of my chair, grabbed hold of her shoulder. She deemed this some sort of sexual approach for as soon as I was seated and the teacher had the ratty old projector going she whispered that I could put my arm round her shoulders if I liked. I did. And during the course of the evening, my eyes

turn to page 10

Growing old begins at 28
States Eminent German Scientist

We begin to get old, to slow down, to lose some of our vitality not as was once thought, at 50 or even 40, but as early as our 28th year. This surprising statement was made at a recent world health conference, as reported in the press, by the eminent German professor of Physio-Chemistry at the Leipzig Faculty of Medicine.

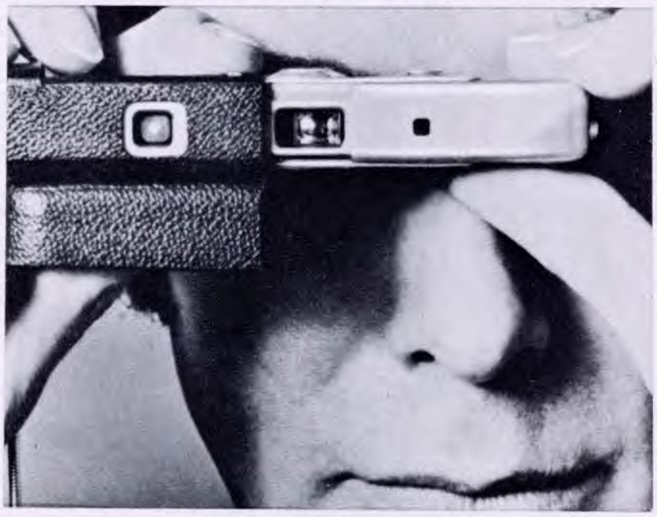
Scientists here too, have been researching the problems of ageing. They have established that adults of all ages need essential nutritional elements to ensure activity, vitality and zest for living. If these elements are missing from your diet (as can so easily be the case) you *feel* older, your blood becomes 'tired' and sluggish and so do you. You lose your appetite for life.

Unless you do something. Phyllosan with iron was specially formulated for those beginning to feel their years. Those in their twenties may need the active ingredients in Phyllosan just as much as those in their middle years.

Try Phyllosan yourself. Benefit from the essential B vitamins and the strength of iron. In just two or three weeks you could have revitalised your blood—found new vitality and zest for life.

Don't feel your age, *take Phyllosan.* Phyllosan

This is a very small, very fast, and very expensive camera with electronic automation



It's a Minox C

The gross loaded weight of the Minox C is only 4oz. That includes film and battery. The mechanism is over 3000 times faster than a racing car. The blades of the shutter system accelerate from 0 to 30mph in 1/2000 of a second.

The mini computer operates electronically with some of the smallest diodes, transistors, condensers, electro magnets and light metering systems you could find. So you can only take good pictures—the Minox C sees to that. Unless you forget to put the film in. But then, you're only human.

MINOX

—the camera you never leave at home.

LETTERS

continued from page 8

firmly fixed on the screen, my hand crept without resistance inside her starchy bra to cup her breast.

Then some moronic sixth former from the row in front whipped out a massive torch and spun round to catch me in its glare. Their attitude had been that they weren't getting it, so neither should I. The master was not amused. I was much abused. And that ended Film Soc.

F.C., Mitcham, Surrey (full name and address withheld on request)

Michael Priestley's schoolday reminiscences in Vol. 6 No. 3 and several previous issues of Mayfair have stirred my own memories.

One lunchtime for instance in the school quad a group of us were discussing what we would do if we positively knew we had one hour left to live. We came to the unanimous conclusion that the moment we heard our minutes were numbered we'd be across the quad as fast as we could run and down to the girls' school. I doubt we would have had the courage to do anything but in those days, sexually unproven as we were, to have it with a girl at least once was the impossible height of our aims.

Needless to say we didn't have to take the plunge.

But now that I've passed this stage of desperation I sometimes still wonder what I would fill my last few minutes with. And it changes from day to day. A half bottle of whisky or my present girlfriend?

It makes interesting thinking though. What would Ted Heath do? Or Barbara Castle, the Queen, Edward Knox for instance?

D.S., Queens' College, Cambridge (full name withheld on request)

Looking through readers' correspondence on *equus eroticus* in back numbers of Mayfair, I was reminded of an incident when I was about 15 or 16. My aunt who was staying with us, slipped and sprained her ankle. 'How am I going to get up to bed?' she asked, when the time came. 'Philip will give you a piggy-back,' said my stepmother, laughing. My aunt looked at me. 'Come along then,' she said. She was a large woman of about thirty at this time, and very shapely.

I had quite a job lifting her and it was even more difficult climbing the stairs. She didn't make it any easier for me by wriggling about and teasing me with her heels. By the time I had reached the first floor I was not only very tired, but also very excited and I had to adjust my clothing. This made her laugh very much and she said, 'Come along now, one more flight to heaven.'

I struggled with her to the bedroom. 'You'll have to help me undress,' she whispered.

I leave the rest to your imagination. I've never been the same since I entered heaven. A day to remember that started with *equus eroticus*.

P.B., Hastings, Sussex (full name and address withheld on request)

Congratulations on your two page spread on *equus eroticus* in Mayfair Vol. 6 No. 3.

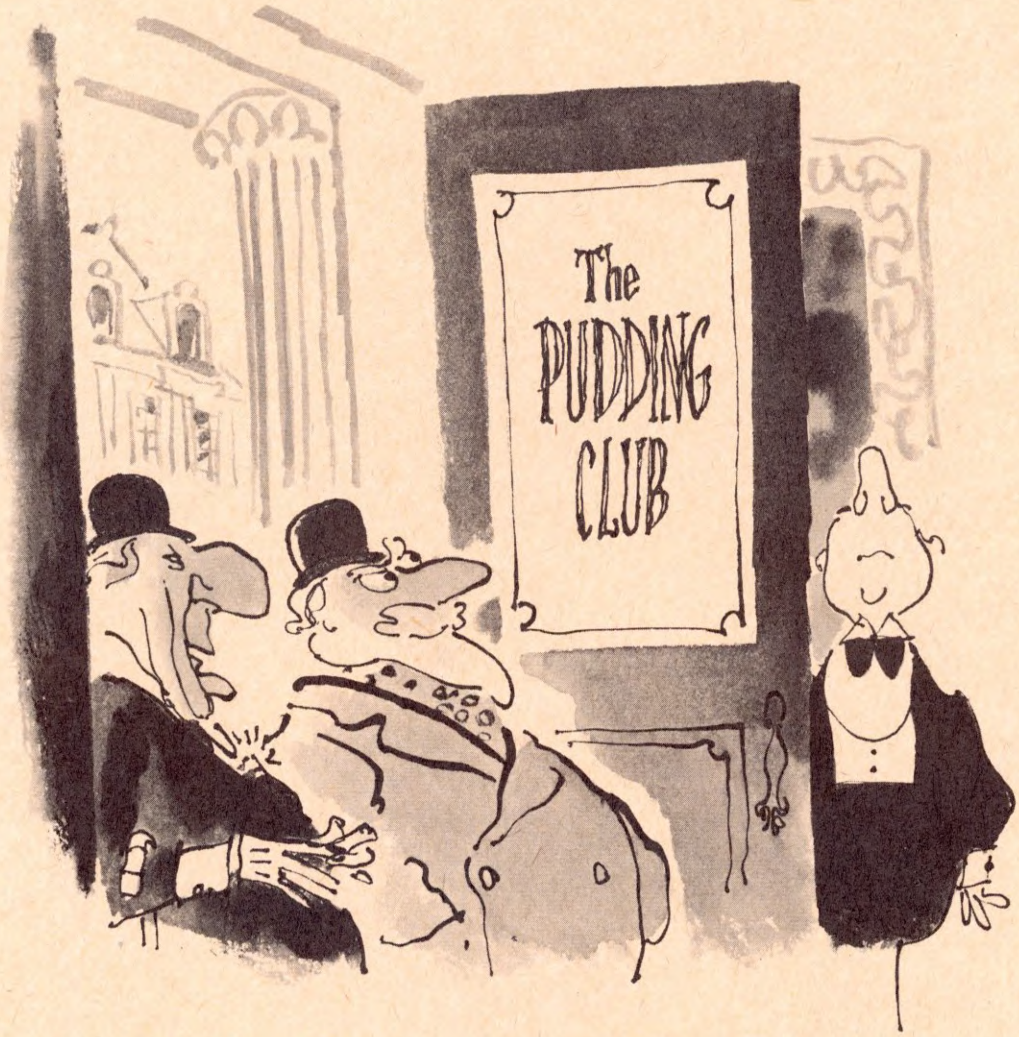
From the little research I have done on the subject, I find the first recorded event of *equus eroticus* occurred in ancient Greek history. It appears that the famous Aristotle fell in love with one of the ladies of the ancient Greek Court. The lady, however, was determined to maintain her state of virginity. In order to reach a compromise over the situation they decided upon the happy solution of *equus eroticus*. Both parties stripped naked and Aristotle allowed the lady to ride astride his back round his garden and both of them found the satisfaction they desired. The event became the subject of a classic painting. From that time up to the time of your review of the film, 'The Libertine' and your subsequent correspondence, *equus eroticus* appears to have gone through a phase of 'no publicity.' It seems a great pity that no deeper research has ever been entered into.

D.M., Kew Gardens, Richmond, Surrey (full name and address withheld on request)

Perhaps Susan G. of Norwich (Vol. 6 No. 3) would tell me whether I have been in the right place at the wrong time or vice-versa.

I have taken my holidays in East Anglia for the past nine years, always spending at least one day in Norwich, but not a bra-less girl have I seen there.

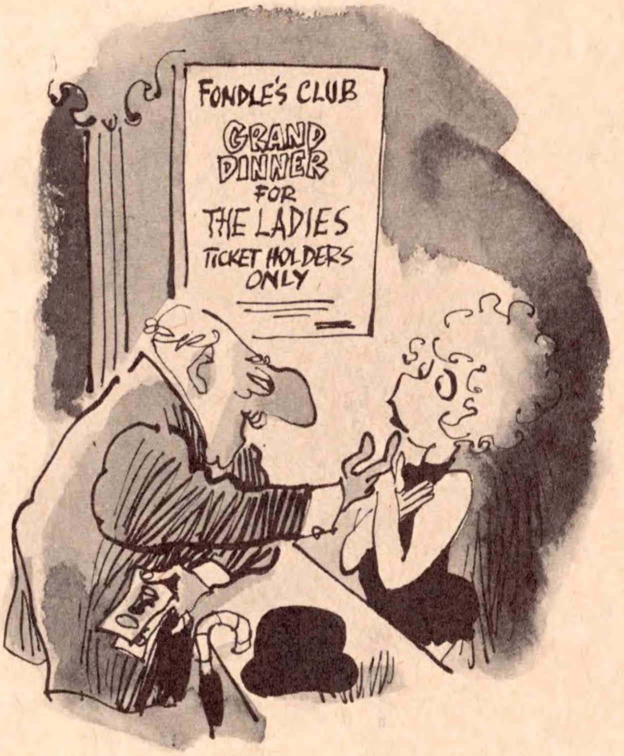
turn to page 80



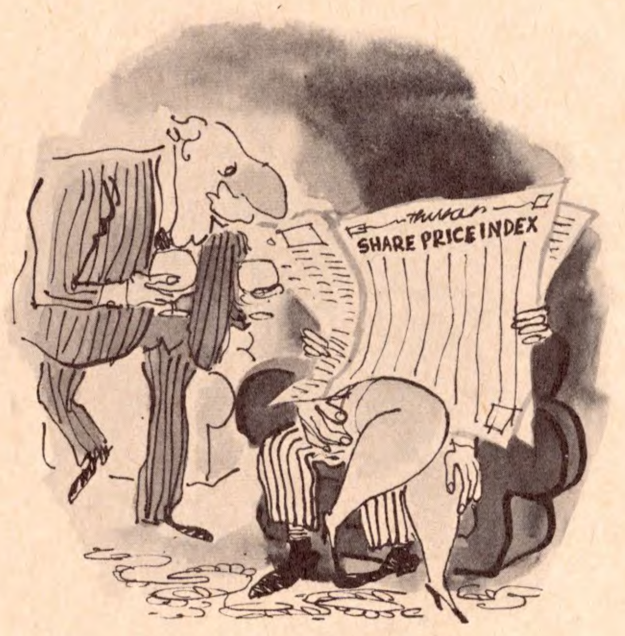
'I guarantee that this is one *club who's bastions will never be stormed by the fair sex, eh, Rolly?'*

Shall the ladies join us?

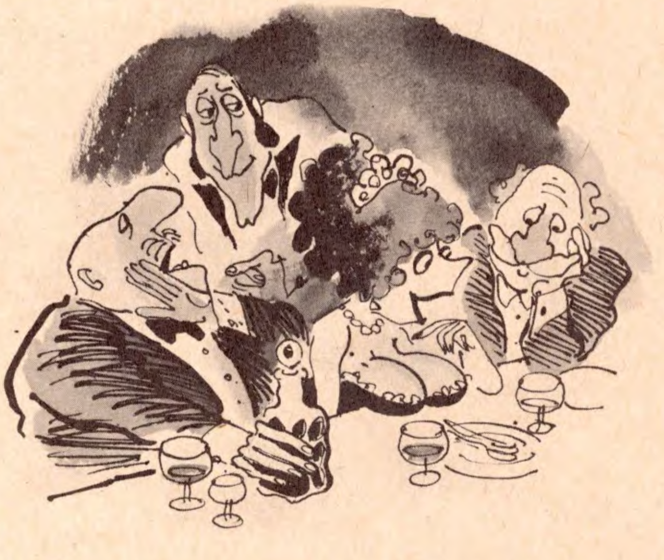
Old traditions die hard. The gentlemens clubs of St James's have always presented to the outside world a stern and masculine facade. Roy Raymonde speculates on what might happen behind those portals if women were allowed in


FONDLE'S CLUB
GRAND DINNER
FOR
THE LADIES
TICKET HOLDERS ONLY

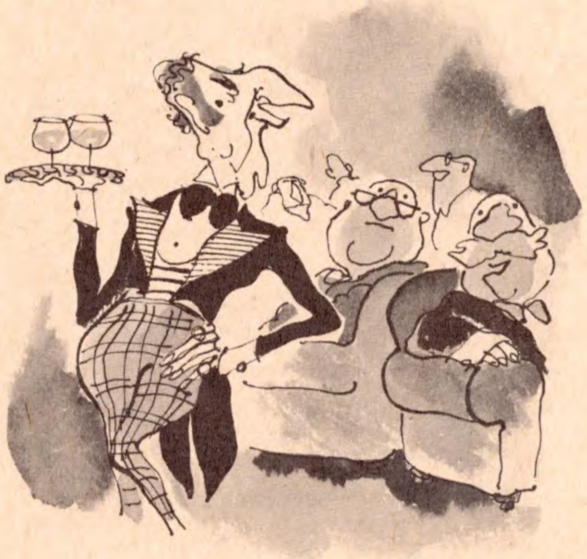
'Come, come, young lady. You look the sort who wouldn't mind squeezing a small, spare member in.'


SHARE PRICE INDEX

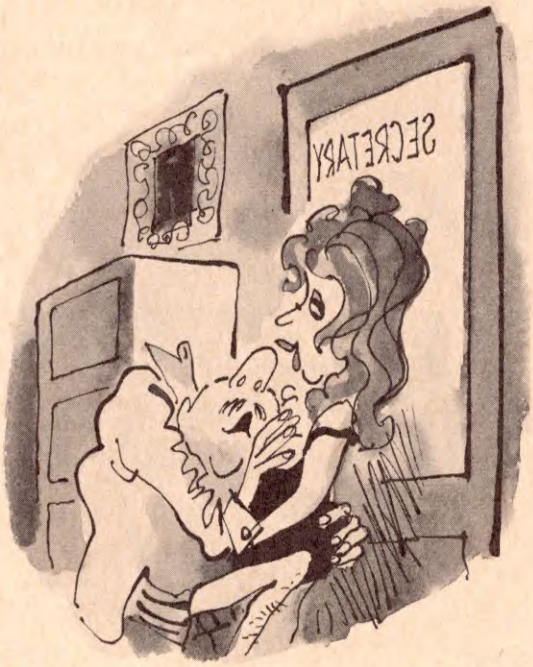
'Come along, Hardwicke, old chap – all work, no play y'know . . .'



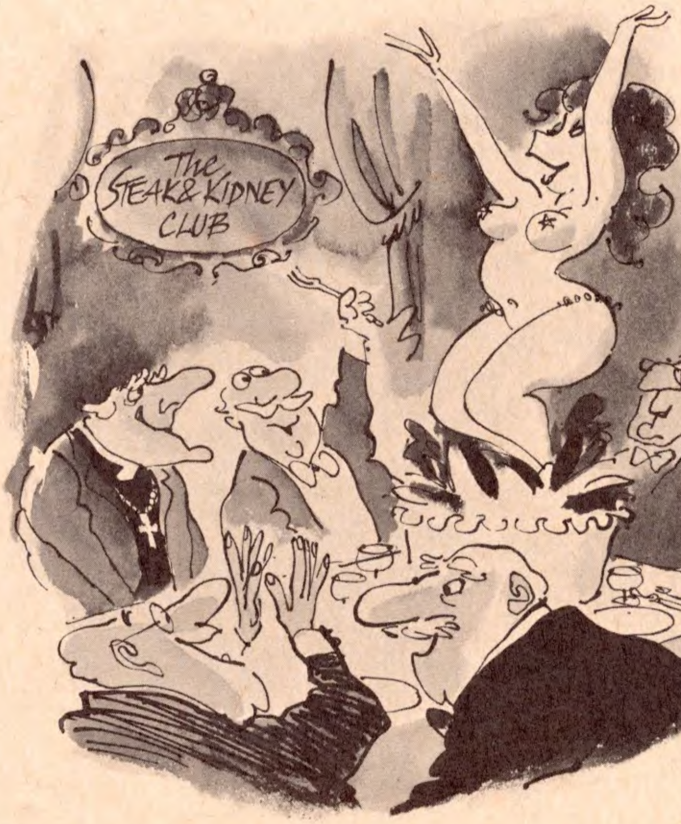
'It's all very well passin' the port to the left, D'Arcy – but under *or* over, *dammit?'*



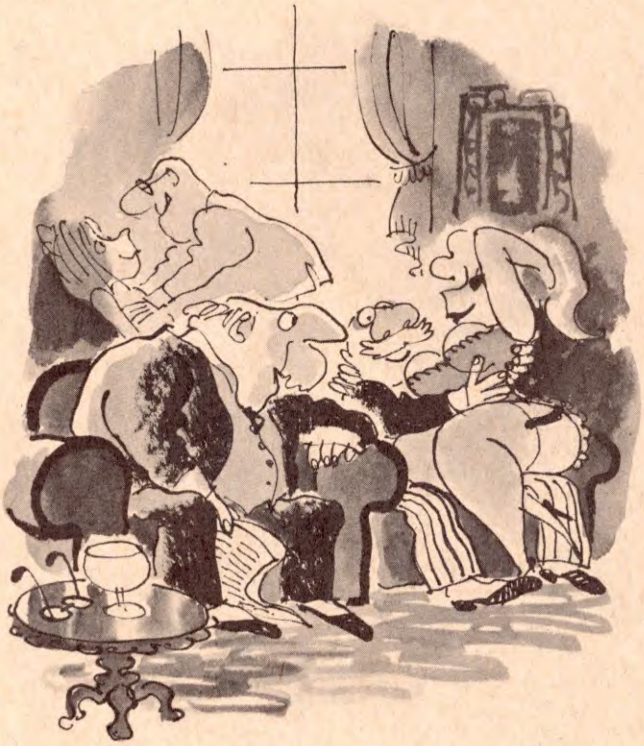
'Gropeworthy's all against lettin' women in, y'know – he held his own as the queen of St James's for more than 40 years.'



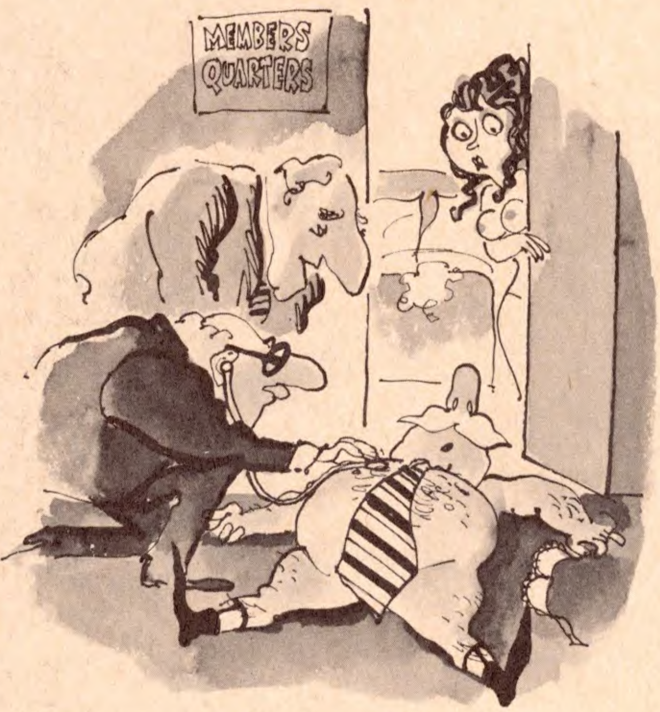
'Yes, I see that, Mr Slattery. But you still haven't explained blackballing *to me.'*


The STEAK & KIDNEY CLUB

'I gather His Grace has been agitating for individual pies.'



'I say, Fortescue – be a good fellow and pass the '42 when you've done with it.'


MEMBERS QUARTERS

'Good old Standish. Loyal to the last.'

BOOKS

Arthur Pottersman

What was it like in the French Revolution, Daddy? James Jones, rugged American ex-marine author whose first novel ‘From Here To Eternity’ hit the world like a bomb, has an answer to that. Provided, that is, you’re referring to the abortive students’ revolt of 1968. In a big new novel, ‘The Merry Month Of May’ (Collins, £2), so portentous that it’s practically erect with significance, James Jones tells how a group of American expatriates saw those wild and giddy days.

At the heart of the story (if that’s the part of the human anatomy I’m thinking of) lays a rich film writer. Yes, sir. I mean *lays*. His technique, for instance, when two lovelies from the silver screen vie with each other to have him enlarge their roles in a new film, is to end up by visiting *both* of them to see what can be done to enhance their parts.

That’s the trouble with Harry. He’s something of a collector: cowboy curios, London pub paraphernalia, pornography, naval items (though Harry never owned a yacht), Hollywood awards . . . and girls.

Harry tells his best friend, Jack, about his girls. For a long time he gave them up – all, that is, except his wife. But before that:

‘I’ve found in general,’ Harry philosophises, ‘that most girls will put it out, and think nothing very much about giving a little bit of it away, if it’s to their interest. After all, there’s always more of it left. And girls learn that, fast. And they do like writers, especially script-writers. So I don’t take credit.’

Harry always was a highly-sexed individual, with an abiding love for the female body – their touch, their smell, their look, right down to the smallest detail. In a way, it didn’t matter for him who owned the body: so long as it was female. Above all, he took pleasure in giving pleasure to a woman – any way. He reckoned his experience reached its ultimate when he stopped being Harry the individual and became just any man to her, bringing her on, by whatever means, towards her coming . . . And that led philosophical Harry on to his next bit of reminiscing, the scene where he got this girl who had, well, a girl *friend*:

‘We did just about everything three people can do together, I guess. I learned one thing. The women have to like it, or it’s no good.’

So, there’s a portrait of Harry for you. His present uxorious state is interrupted by his rebellious son joining up with the revolting French students. The family is pretty upset by that sort of thing, but well, it happens. Harry was a pretty strong rebel in his way, too, and his son knows it, and his son is all the more angry for his father’s tolerance of it all . . . Which gets even funnier for us readers when Harry’s son gets onto some sort of half-baked students’ film-making committee, the sole girl member of which ‘goes down’ on the four male members. James Jones portrays a pretty comic fantasy in which the revolutionary girl stands like a sergeant before her four ranked boys, ‘all standing at attention with large erections projecting from their Revolutionary uniforms, and her going down the line like a good Commissar.’

Into this Parisian hothouse of political fervour comes Sam, a beautiful black girl with shaved armpits, small breasts, and skintight pants that outlined quite clearly the two lips of her little crack. Sam, at 19, couldn’t give a thing for any revolution – or students.

They’ve all got plenty of personal ambition in there with the altruism, she reckons. All Sam wants is enough money to get out of Paris and fly to her girl friend in Israel. Yep, it’s like that for Sam.

And it’s also like, she’s pretty good at the threesome reel as well. She’s healthy, beautiful, agile and totally amoral.

Harry falls for Sam. (But at first he stays uxorious.)

So does his son. But, not having to stay anything, Harry’s son gets down among the sleeping bags in the backrooms of the occupied Sorbonne with the lithe and leggy young thing. Not only does he get down with her. He falls for her, too. Really falls for her. So that when Sam, still after the money, makes her big play for Harry and proves irresistible, naturally Harry’s son takes off. The family is shattered – and it’s not a bad bit of characterisation that Sam knew if she wanted to get at Harry’s money she had to tempt him by putting up his son first.

She sure has style, that girl Sam. When Harry’s friend Jack goes to her hotel room to try and remonstrate with her, she sums him up, too: ‘She was lying on the one bed on her back absolutely stark naked . . . She certainly didn’t try to cover herself . . . She had medium large nipples, with definite but not very protruding paps . . . But the most extraordinary thing was her crotch, her bush. It had an amazingly thick, lush growth so black it seemed almost blue . . . A hairy triangle of such thickness and depth that you felt you might never be able to find your way through that jungle.’

Sam first asked: ‘Would you like to fuck me?’ . . . languorously. No, says Jack, aiming to try and sort out a mess.

‘Maybe you would like to go down on me, then.’

Jack never did sort out Harry’s problems. But what a novel!

In 1906 a Great Western locomotive while running with a fully laden train achieved 120 mph as a ‘dare’ and was in danger of leaving the rails. This is one of many previously little known facts taken from ‘British Steam Since 1900’, a compact and informative paperback history of steam in which W A Tuplin goes some way to explain the fascination of steam. The picture, taken from the book, is the Duchess of Montrose hauling the LMS Mid-day Scot northward past South Kenton. It is published by Pan at 45p

FILMS

David Quinlan

With the box-office receipts still pouring in from the superbly bad *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls*, two more Russ Meyer films have received the purification of the English censor's X certificate – albeit in mutilated form.

The better of the two is *Cherry, Harry and Raquel* (the other one is *Vixen*, which consists largely of girls running naked through rivers and is all very nice if you don't care for plots). *Cherry etc* is reminiscent of those smouldering early Bardot films, but with an added coat of violence, the like of which has inspired some critics to form a Society for the Protection of Audiences. The man who likes a double dose of sex may not feel at all the same about blood fountaining all over the screen.

The film is set at a hospital in an Arizona border town on the edge of a vast desert. It's from here that Frank, a patient, organises a narcotics-smuggling racket, with the help of Cherry, his mistress, and the sexiest nurse to stalk across screen since Essy Persson in *I, a Woman*. Alas, Frank's associate, Apache, and *his* mistress, Raquel, make a take-over bid. Double-cross follows double-cross and killing pursues killing. Blood and breasts occupy the screen alternately, in fact, until a very gory shoot-out, when the whole thing turns out to have been the imagination of one of the characters involved. Not the newest dodge in the book. Meyer's latest film, *Seven Minutes* (if the censor gets his way, that's how long it may run) features that grizzled veteran Jay C. Flippen, who died soon after completing it. No comment.

The girl is Vibeke, a Norwegian discovery, making her debut in 'Obsessions', released through Border Films. Vibeke's memorable assets, a most remarkable bosom, are well to the fore in this Dutch thriller

Cotten Comes to Harlem (X) is a straight cops-and-robbers yarn with larger than life characters and a negro setting. It's strongly reminiscent of *They Call Me Mister Tibbs*, especially with its story of a crooked minister – guilty not this time of murder, but of fleecing his own black people of their money. Two detectives are on his trail, names of Coffin Ed Johnson and Gravedigger Jones.

Like so many films these days, Ossie Davis' directional debut never seems quite sure on what level it's operating. Social document, Bond thriller, way-out comedy and vicious crime meller: it has a go at all of them. The four-letter words flow faster than the bullets; and a couple of black chicks strip off most attractively on the way. It's a queer bird and no mistake.

What next for Robert Redford after *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*? The answer turns out to be *Little Fauss and Big Halsy* (AA), a slow motor-racing film. Don't get me altogether wrong. It does have Redford, Michael J. Pollard, a catchy theme song and a collection of the biggest boobs in town as the girls who follow the dirt-track circuit and its riders.

But the racing scenes are muddled and the fact that one's sympathy is shifted from one character to another gives the whole film a disjointed effect. Pollard's mumbling (which renders half his dialogue inaudible) eventually affects Redford – who still exudes a considerable star aura. After all, Clark Gable nodded too – even in the great days.

Hard on the heels – if that's the right expression – of *Percy* comes *The Statue* (X), another penis comedy, this time about a man who tries to prevent a nude statue of himself going up in Grosvenor Square. The reason: it has someone else's (to coin a phrase from *Anatomy of a Murder*) private parts.

David Niven, Virna Lisi and Robert Vaughn give the kind of cheerless performances one might expect in a film of this kind, even without poor direction. But Britain's John Cleese and Tim Brooke-Taylor do their best to save a film whose big trouble is that it's racy but not pacy.

RESTAURANTS

Charles Fforde

When eating out even the most free-thinking of us tend to obey the orthodox rule 'go where you know'. It is a very human failure. Consider the syndrome. You're taking out a new bird, anxious to impress. The Savoy? Perhaps, but then the chances are that the arrival of Sir Charles Oppulant and his party will steal the limelight and the service. The new little trendy restaurant you've seen? Perhaps, but the food may be awful, it often is. Where do you settle for? That little Chinese or French restaurant you've been going to for years and where you are greeted like the old friend you really are. How do you break free from

turn to page 18

A Happier Sex Life

This is the ultimate book that shows you how you can gain complete sexual mastery and expertise. Dr. Sha Kokken, world renowned Japanese author, leaves no single aspect of sex undiscussed or unexamined. By a unique method he uses more than 400 pictures to demonstrate in complete detail, every possible attitude and position of lovemaking and erotic stimulation. Through these pictures, sex as an art is brought to an incredible level of finesse. The fact that this book has sold more than two million copies is no surprise. Each copy is sent to you in an individual slip case pack

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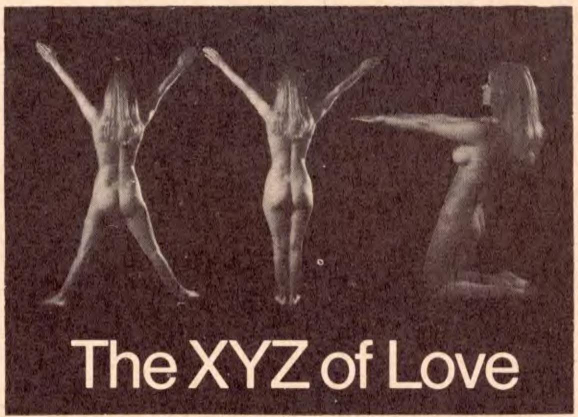

In this uncut Danish book, psychologists Inge and Sten Hegeler recount the sexual case histories of men and women who have asked them for enlightenment. The wife who told her husband to buy a riding whip; the girl who wanted her boyfriend to spank her; the man who slept with his sister. The original Danish illustrations are retained

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Restaurants

continued from page 15

this constricting circle? I can offer one way. Me, Charles Fforde. I write for Mayfair because it does not fall for the fashionable trends. You will not find me saying 'I had the artichoke and Mary settled for the Duck Pate. It was very moist and rich'. The only thing most men want to know that's moist and rich is a willing and beautiful bird.

Neither do I slam restaurants. The bad ones will close soon enough without any help from me. If I don't like a restaurant I don't write about it. Conversely, if I do, I do, so to speak. Which brings me to an intriguing little door in Walton Street which runs parallel to Brompton Road in London SW6. A three minute stroll from the Victoria and Albert Museum.

This door is the entrance to the Jacaranda restaurant. You look at it as a newcomer and you have no idea whether it is reasonable or expensive, good or bad. The door looks as if it leads to a patio and that usually means expensive. So you settle for your own little Chinese restaurant. Not so fast. Do go through the door because it leads to one of the nicest of restaurants in this part of London. It will cost you about seven pounds for two for a fine evening and I don't think that fantastic today when loomen are on £1,500 a year and probably earn every single penny of it.

The Jacaranda is run by the young and charming Stephanie, wife of Al Burnett. When she comes to talk to you tell her you come on a Mayfair recommendation. The drinks will not thereafter be free, but you will be well looked after. The main part of the restaurant is a lofty hall, a welcome change from the majority of low ceilinged basements of today. You are, in fact, in Lord Walton's former squash court.

And if you like the useless formation of history, the house from which Miss Clementine Hosier left for her Westminster marriage to a brash young politician called Winston Churchill.

The food is French and is the artistry of Jacques and Alain who are enthusiastic about their list of dishes. For starters I can recommend moules mariniere at 35p, snails at 40p or vol au vent filled with chicken truffles in white wine sauce, also 40p. Among the main dishes the steaks are supremely good and something like entrecote marchand de vin, a beefsteak in red wine sauce costs 90p. The wine list is wide ranging. Following Hilaire Belloc's excellent advice that the second cheapest wine on the list is often the best value, that leaves you in somewhat of a dilemma at the Jacaranda.

There are well over a dozen wines at the second cheapest price (ignoring carafes) at £1·60, including an excellent Vosne Romanee or even your actual Mateus Rose.

Telephone number for reservations is 01–589 0075.

Murray Ball

'Porridge'

NIGHTLIFE

Kenneth Dowd

Having persuaded the Diners Club to pay, involuntarily, an enormous fortune to see me across the length and breadth of America by virtue of their magnificent plastic card, which opened all sorts of magic doors to me, I feel that credit is due to the Diners Club, first of all for opening this column's eyes to plastic America.

I say plastic America advisedly, since no other single material can have made a greater impact on a nation's way of living. My Diners plastic credit card was certainly the key to all this, and it acted like a magic Ambassador as it opened the doors to every possible facet of life. With such vast distances involved, the card is an essential pre-requisite to 'travel'. Before I had even stepped into TWA's superb 747 flying cinema, the card had done its work, and until the moment that I stepped out of my self-drive Avis car at Kennedy Airport on the way home (at the concessional rate of £41·50 for a week with the first 1,000 miles of driving included free – no mileage charge), virtually my every expense had been paid for by the magic plastic card.

In between these two events, I certainly became 'the man in a hurry' that you read about, through the magnificent concession of a 'Visit-USA-Unlimited-Travel-Ticket' which permits you to wander with unlimited mileage over all of America's Regional Airlines, and discover America very economically indeed. My 20,000 miles of travel in this manner is not unusual, so the Airlines assured me, and whilst the theme is plastic let me assure you that I did not need to use their little plastic bags even once! Cost? $150.

From the air America is Red. Not from any Communistic tendencies, but simply because the predominant colour is definitely red, at night that is. There is a red glow permanently in the sky from a thousand million red neon advertisement signs, and as you look down at the phenomenal motorway pattern, you see the red glow from every American car's eight red rear plastic lights.

On the ground you are constantly reminded of our plastic theme by a series of exciting electric shocks which emanate from their nylon carpets and plastic soles. The Bunny who kissed me at Hollywood Playboy Club passed an electric shock which was far beyond her line of duty, unless this came under the heading of entertaining the customers, as my startled expression amused ten bystanders!

But although plastics succeeded in giving me my greatest kick in America, they also contributed to my greatest disappointment. I wish I had never seen America's disposable plastic cafés. It starts as you enter and sit on your plastic chair at your plastic-topped table. It continues through the plastic-backed menu to the plastic cruet on the table. Above you the plastic flowers look down from their plastic holders, and the light bulbs shine below their plastic shades. Below you, the nylon carpet glows in luminous colours.

Your meal comes in plastic throw-away plates, with plastic disposable cutlery of course, and even the cup for your coffee is a throw-away plastic beaker. The mustard is in its plastipack, and your baked potato is in its plastic paper nestling next to the chicken in its plastic basket.

When you produce your plastic credit card to pay the bill, you may look over your shoulder and see the remnants of the plastic gathering being removed 'en bloc' from the top of your table and dropped fait accompli into a large plastic disposable bin. The maitre d' will smile at you (no doubt through plastic teeth) as you sadly leave wondering if maybe they don't throw the whole place away at night, and arrive to a new plastic heaven the next morning. Maybe it is more hygienic than our mahogany tables and ex-WD cutlery and NAAFI crockery, but I for one prefer the feeling of permanence these relics give.

ROSALIND

She lives in the Pennine town of Buxton. At 19 her customers claim she's the most striking barmaid in Derbyshire. They admire the way she pulls a pint, they admire her 35–22–35 figure and they call her Ros. 'It's just the short skirts I wear,' she told us, laughing. 'That's what they like about the way I pull pints.'

'I never thought I'd become a barmaid. I always thought you had to be, you know, buxom, to be a barmaid. But I was offered the job by a friend and I thought, why not? It did get a bit too much at one stage though. Someone put this rumour out that I didn't wear panties under my skirt and so I was forever bending down for bottles on the bottom shelf and the bar was crowded. It was probably the manager started it to get more custom.'

Did she go without panties ever? 'Well yes, it gives me a lot of satisfaction to go out without them now and then especially if I feel randy. But obviously I always wear them in the pub.'

Her gaze is direct. She looks you straight in the face with disarming candour. You feel that she might be stripping your soul bare. You just have to be honest with her because she is so honest with you.

'No-one ever asked me to be photographed naked before. But why not? I suppose there is a film in the camera?' She laughs. Yes, Ros, as you can see, there was. You weren't wearing panties though were you?

ILLUSTRATION BY PHILIP CASTLE

HIGHLIFE SENTIMENTALE

highlife (hig'līf), *n.* Generic title of Ghanaian dance music.
sentimentale (son'timontal), *n.* Slow Togolese dance music, similar to highlife.

Fiction by Michael Kelly

It was the evening that we were watching Frank O'Connor talking at Trinity College, Dublin, on television. I was sprawling on the cushions between the sofa and the fire with Lily's head on my lap. Red hair. Lacquered. Lily naked too: long white body with obvious ribs and her glass beside her on the carpet. This is not pornography because it is about to contain redeeming human qualities, affective feeling, affecting feeling, compassion, realism, understanding, the whole liberal eyewash. I had just decided to admit to myself that

turn to page 27

HIGHLIFE SENTIMENTALE

continued from page 25

I did not love Lily, who in any case did not love me. We had made our usual urgent, strenuous love on the sofa and the cushions on the floor. If you can call love-making the last-ditch prurient scrupulosity of a Catholic *virgo technica sed certe non intacta* who, like Lily, allows herself everything but you nothing beyond eagerly received fingerwork. The usual histrionic moans, derived from mass media treatments; the contortions of duty-orgasm learnt from women's magazines; the relief of my tensions in a Yardley's-toilet-watered handkerchief; the murmurous sentimental 'Darling, thank you for loving me so nicely tonight'; half-'Sound of Music' return to romance, half-intuitive care that my frustration should not develop beyond a certain embryonic discontent. Languorous, but postorgasmically unsensual kisses; perhaps a touch of real tenderness; a hint of briskness. That's over. Let's think about cocoa or the last bus or closing the gates in college.

Lily was a stereotype gold-digger. Moments of what were almost certainly real tenderness, real affection, did not nullify this view. She enjoyed sexual games: of the harmless undemanding kinds she could inveigle from me. But that was part of her gold-digging: sexual entertainment figured naturally alongside financial entertainment, alcoholic entertainment, car-riding entertainment, meals in classy restaurants entertainments, general relief from all old college monotony entertainments. She was so beautifully obvious that at first I thought I loved her for it. For it; in spite of it: who knows? The tiny shrivelled underdeveloped deprived personality beneath it, with the cliché bad-family background, inconsistent neglect and rows. The brassy sentimental, sensual, overtly greedy, overtly-momentarily-remorsefully-self-conscious about overt-greediness exterior.

She liked her body. From the point of view of sensation. Of indulging appetites: for endless vodkas and blackcurrant, cream cakes, helpings of scampi or steak, play with her breasts and clitoris. The moment she wanted any of these things. The slightest delay and self-pitying tears would threaten to spill over her false eye-lashes on to her thickly-rouged and powdered cheeks and past her palely-lipsticked and cigarette-tasting mouth. Heaven help me if she did ever actually spill any tears into the careless but thickly vulnerable make-up.

If that happened it was all stops to tragedy and at least half an hour of assurances, bitterness, lachrymose and inconsistent autobiography, cuddles, reserve, poutings, minor sadistic forays in the form of pinches and nips, reassurances, sentimental reconciliations based on prospects of some treat or other, perhaps new sensual bouts depending on how much her wallowing had aroused herself in that direction.

These scenes were increasingly irritating and she was wisely reducing their number. Did her obviousness arouse pity or the perverse in me? I still don't know. Possibly both. Certainly I liked her flagrant self-indulgent sensuality. She seemed genuinely to like mine. The one sure genuine point of contact. The justification?

I stroked her neck. She trembled and bent her head for more. She gave one of her little affected murmurs of kittenry. I stroked the nearest breast. She bent her head further so I couldn't miss where she wanted to be touched. I deliberately hesitated. She flashed a quick nasty, quickly subdued look. I moved to stroke her neck. She ran her fingers up and down the inside of my left thigh. I stroked her neck; she stroked my thigh and my reawakening genitals. 'Already,' she giggled. And suddenly sprang up, gulped her drink, changed Frank O'Connor for some noise on the Light, picked up handfuls of clothes and jiggled out of the room to wash and dress.

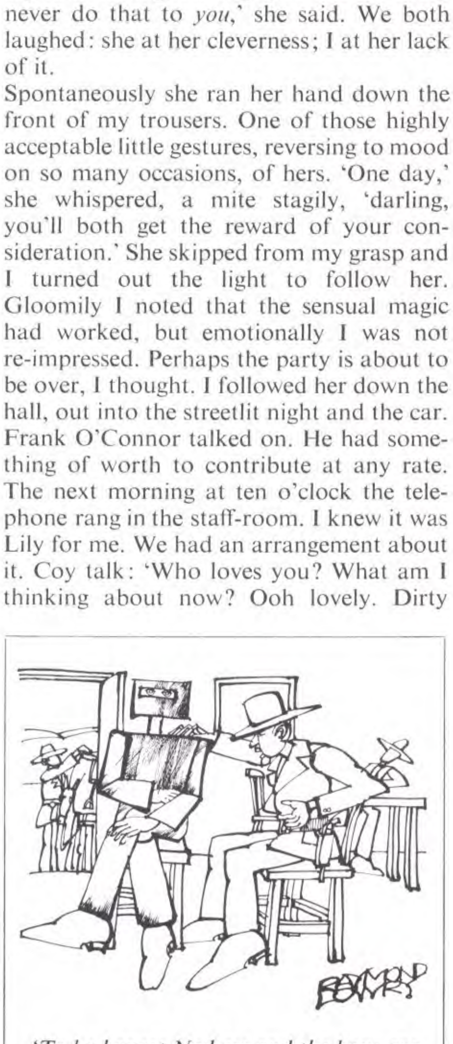
I brought back Frank O'Connor and dressed in front of the television.

'Do I look all right?' she said. 'Edible,' I said. 'Don't be silly,' she said: 'you'll mess up my hair.' 'Your hair is meant to be messed up,' I said. 'You've had your ration,' she said. 'You're in danger of becoming a taking for granted little bore, darling,' I said.

Her rapid look and almost subliminal policy softening. Playful tap on cheek. 'Don't ever say that darling, darling: you know I could never do that to *you*,' she said. We both laughed: she at her cleverness; I at her lack of it.

Spontaneously she ran her hand down the front of my trousers. One of those highly acceptable little gestures, reversing to mood on so many occasions, of hers. 'One day,' she whispered, a mite stagily, 'darling, you'll both get the reward of your consideration.' She skipped from my grasp and I turned out the light to follow her. Gloomily I noted that the sensual magic had worked, but emotionally I was not re-impressed. Perhaps the party is about to be over, I thought. I followed her down the hall, out into the streetlit night and the car. Frank O'Connor talked on. He had something of worth to contribute at any rate.

The next morning at ten o'clock the telephone rang in the staff-room. I knew it was Lily for me. We had an arrangement about it. Coy talk: 'Who loves you? What am I thinking about now? Ooh lovely. Dirty beast.' And so on. I let it ring a few times. The French mistress was in the room brooding grimly no doubt about exile in marriage as opposed to blissful normalité in some provincial hole south of Tours as she marked 2B's nasty little scripts. Sanderson the chemistry master was sitting at the table opposite me picking his nostril with a pencil. For a moment I felt some alarm that it might be my pencil. I checked in my pocket. Luckily not mine; though it was bound to be someone else's. He never used his own.



'To be honest Ned me and the boys are thinking of selling you for scrap . . .'

He was sprawled back in a slump-cushioned low armchair and had one foot on the table a few inches from a cigarette-end-filled institutional coffee cup and saucer. The typical squalor of an English Grammar school staff-room. Q: Why do teachers in England get paid so poorly? A: because they're not worth any more.

My mate Leo, the art master, was sitting beside me. He was using his own Biro on his ear. Moodily. No doubt he was brooding about how he was ever (tomorrow, today at lunch-break, today after school hours) to get the pants off Madame Parker in the staff marking-room. Little else preoccupied him in his school leisure moments. He had surprised me the other day by telling me that his new batch of evening classes had brought him amatory solace with a twenty year old brunette who reminded him of Sophia Loren, which he richly needed since his wife had just finished giving birth to their first child.

'You need a little filly on the sly,' had been his exact words of explanation. I had been even more surprised. I had not seen him as in any way a riding man or given to even the most generalised horsey remarks. 'Don't look so shocked,' he said. 'It's only that I'm not afraid to admit I'm a normal man. There's nothing wrong or unusual about it.'

'Don't protest overmuch,' I said, 'I'm only shocked at the idea of you as a man of saddle and withers and blue rosettes.'

He guffawed. 'Oh I ride all right,' he said. 'Nothing fancy about me: I always like to stay on top. That's my position.'

Now he supplemented the Biro in his ear with a fingernail between his teeth. Obsessively. Constipated-looking. 'You're insatiable,' I whispered and reached for the phone. He got it before me. 'It's not me, darling; it's someone else,' he said into it. 'Loverboy's just coming, if you'll excuse the expression. Panting upstairs and into the straight.' He threw it to me and I luckily caught it.

'That,' I said, 'was the man from the knacker's yard. And how are you my little darling, after last night's excesses?'

'Is that you, Mr Nolan?' the parish priest said. 'I'm sure I asked for the right number but all this "darling this and darling that" has me wondering.'

He wanted me to help him out in connection with a foreign students' evening at the parish house.

Foreign students' evenings, even at the parish house, were just Lily's style. There was for instance the sensational aspect: all

turn to page 56

HIGHLIFE SENTIMENTALE

continued from page 27

those primitives in their picturesque robes with heaven knows what colourful urges and modes of rape, mayhem, violence, difference, excitement, lurking behind their dark or less dark inscrutable appearances. The Black Power in fancy-dress-for-students syndrome.

There was also the liberal aspect: look at me being Lady Muck to these poor benighted inarticulate people, dispensing cider and light laughter and patience and solicitude and outrageously intimate carefully graded linguistic sallies to bring a little joy of the civilised Western oh so svelte kind into their denuded little savage lives. No demands possible; gratuitous condescension.

In my view the transparence of it all was chiefly bearable to the recipients because of the sensual crudity just beneath Lily's superiority act. She was crudely attractive because she was so obviously exciting herself as well as everyone else continuously at these assemblies. Racial intercourse as first-impression masturbation, now rather than later. But woe-betide the contact man who thought the look-look, stroke-stroke, laugh-laugh act implied anything genuine. I still remember a Burmese student she actually slapped in the car park after one of these evenings: his face of betrayed tricked impotent fury. Her excited patter of reliving self-justification: 'the animal: you try to be nice to these people and all they want is to cheapen you.' Rant, rant. 'Kiss me, darling. Let's stop here and love a bit. Honestly the little swine. Yes; touch me; please. Now; there.' Which all seems to add up to sensationalism and liberalism without sincerity are a mess. With sincerity they seem to be a mess, too, but a different sort. Most of these evenings had not been very enjoyable in my experience. As a teacher and a moderately well-intentioned layman I was however on the regular lists of the parish priest to lend a hand and precisely because of the boredom and emptiness involved I felt guilty if I did not oblige. I mentioned this evening's evening to Leo. When he had stopped laughing about the mistaken identity, he said he had his exhibition of paintings to invigilate. The Central Midlands War Baby Generation Pre-Pop Post-Pop Inter-Pop Petit Bourgeois Group Show. I said: '*Evening*, Leo, *evening*.'

He said: 'I know bloody evening. My bloody exhibition stays open till nine. I have to take over from our only currently out-of-work group member after school. More than four bloody hours. If you rustle up any gorgeous Chinese or West Indian octoroons send them along. We've got a fire in the back room.'

Which left me with no protection from Lily. Who knew, of course, all about the evening as she was a fully paid-up rosary- and pamphlet-swinging member of the relevant student mission aid society. 'I won't have time to meet you before it begins,' she told me, 'as I'm going to shampoo my hair for it and it won't have time to dry until just about the time to go.'

'You want to arrive unaccompanied to make maximum impression on eligible males – fat chance of there being any there,' I said.

'Oh darling,' she said, 'how could you think such a thing.' With that quick veiled obvious look to see if I was serious and what a hot retort would be worth.

'Experience,' I said, 'you're like an open book.'

Tears filled her eyes. 'And I thought I was being considerate,' she said. One of her new all-circumstance words. 'I thought you would like a moment or two to yourself. After all only last night you told me I was in danger of becoming a bore.' Smile; but flash of malice in quickly lowered eye.

'Don't quote me out of context,' I said. 'Just look back on last night's use of the word.' But then I thought, any fruitless development of this topic would play into her hands by complicating my stand and compromising the increasing honesty of feeling I was rapidly achieving towards her.

'O.K.,' I said. 'You are selfless, thoughtful, sweet-natured, kindly, considerate and about to become clean. Perhaps I'll see you there.'

Moment of sharp doubt in her grey-green mascara'd eyes. She always wanted witnesses to her vicarious sexual triumphs and guardians to bale her out in case of crisis.

'Relax,' I said, 'I'll be there when you want me.' Relief, mixed with irritation at my way of putting things, in her long-mouth quick-eye smile. 'Oh, darling, I always want you, you know that.' Fingers gliding on my bare wrist above shirt-cuff. Pleasant without doubt. Sudden nip with long fingernails. I yelped.

She laughed and got up to leave the bar, a regular assignation pit. 'No,' she said, 'don't misunderstand me. If you want to take me, I'll get ready for my lord and master in good time. Specially.' She swept into a curtsy which was very helpful in reminding me that she had soft young white breasts, and, by association, a soft young white belly and thighs and buttocks. And, hastily, just in case she was being serious, I assured her not to contemplate such a thing.

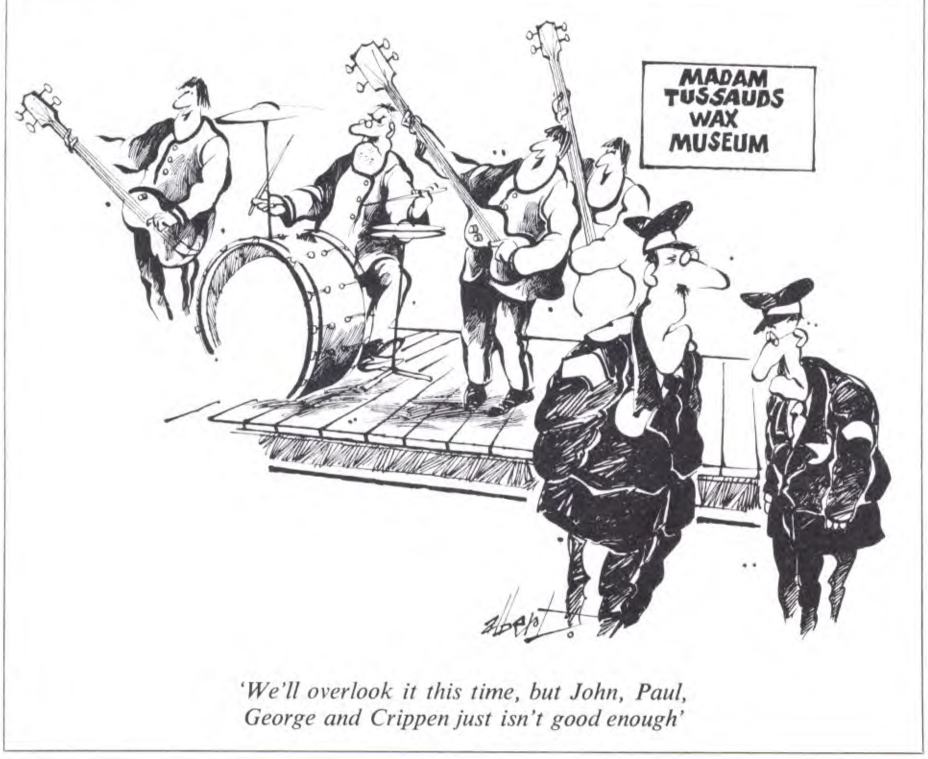
'I never really did,' she smiled. Which stands a good chance of being truth for once, I dare say.

When I actually got to the party, as the evening was called, I had taken the precaution of eating and drinking just before. To induce general goodwill, benevolence, compassion, outward-goingness, patience, sensitive heartiness, stoicism with hardy epicurean tendencies if necessary, epicurean tendencies for preference. A slight touch of urbanity perhaps; but no whiff of condescension. Basically a well-fed, alcohol-aided, but not alcohol-induced, humanistic euphoria. Sensitive but sanguine. The evening was given a great initial lift by finding Lily fully engaged with four Far-Eastern students at the far end of the room. The Far-Eastern end of the room. A fleeting wave and smile and she was back at the fervid hostessing she was so conspicuous at. The parish priest took me over.

Over to the drinks table and a couple of Indians. They were silent together. Both held cups of tea. One was Keralan, the other from Bombay. The first had an Old Testament name; the other a Portuguese one. They spoke to me in turn. Seriously. Avid, in a fundamentally melancholy and hopeless way, for information.

Was it Indian despair or lassitude? A hopelessness about the purposefulness or meaning of anything while anxious to miss nothing. The product of centuries of malnutrition and the post-colonial cult of

turn to page 58



'We'll overlook it this time, but John, Paul, George and Crippen just isn't good enough'

HIGHLIFE SENTIMENTALE

continued from page 56

Western technology? Sometimes they asked different questions; sometimes the same question. In turn. I don't think I have anything against India: it is so distant, so rich in different traditions and customs and races and styles. Some of my best relatives were old India hands.

But as usual with actual Indians not of metropolitan Brahmin culture, I began, after about half an hour, to feel mounting claustrophobia and irritation. A constricting miasma of twittering, superficial, polite, pained, basically negative literalism. Absence of wit, scepticism (overt), hard-mindedness (apparent), general knowledge. Arduous politeness without courtesy or human interest. Leaden tight-roping at etiquette.

As usual I prayed that I was mistaken, bilious; I made efforts to string along, not to make incomprehensible references, incomprehensible jokes. The strain was beginning to tell. I wondered if I looked desperate: a sort of ancient mariner in reverse. The Indians began to seem like lean-spirited, dark vultures, circling in rotation to fly in and pick off the offal of noisome knowledge that the representative of a moribund civilisation could bare his breast to offer.

One licked his lips, braced himself and swooped in for yet another pillage. I felt a surge of resistance, an urge to meet pedantic hollow flannel with something outrageous, something genuine and gutsy that might well cause alarm and shatter the frail fabric of this strained attitudinising. I was foiled. 'Vere,' he said in the same monotonously urgent tone as ever, in his agonising imitation of Peter Sellers, 'is the toilet?'

The two took their leave, one after the other. In file. Lightheaded with relief and reckless I looked round for action. I noticed an African girl in a garishly cubist costume of strips of strict rectangles of bright colours, heavier and more impregnable-looking than cotton, silk perhaps, made into a full-length skirt, a short-sleeved blouse and a shoulder cloth. She was standing at the corner of the bar-table against the wall. Alone. A nearly empty glass in her hand. I went over. 'Drink?' I asked. She made a moue. 'Don't worry about that,' I said, relying on traditional African bonhomie to see us through. 'That's gnat's piss,' indicating the glass she held and the light ale available on the table. I brought out my hip-flask. 'Let's have a try at this,' I said. She beamed. Infectiously.

I got a clean glass for her and held it out. She emptied and put down the one she held. I poured a good helping of whiskey into her glass. She did not demur. Which provisionally endeared her a good deal. In contrast with the chattering teetotallers who had just left. I gave myself a generous portion as well. 'Peter Nolan,' I said. 'Cheers.' I raised my glass. The African girl surprised me. 'Good evening,' she said. 'My name is Rose Appiah.' And offered me her hand to shake.

After five years in Africa I am still caught out by this insistence on 'good morning' or 'good evening' or whatever time of day is appropriate, at some early stage in any given conversation, whatever foot or subject you have in fact already started off on. This first time it had me staggered. I simply shook her hand, said 'good evening,' beamed fatuously, said 'cheers then' and we began to drink.

"What is it?" she asked. I told her it was whiskey. She said she had drunk whiskey and this was somehow different.

I told her it was Irish. 'What did you say that stuff was?' she asked pointing at the pale ale. 'Gnat's piss,' I said. 'Gnat's peesss,' she said, looking delighted. 'What is a gnat?' 'A small fly like a mosquito,' I said. She chuckled. 'Gnat's peesss,' she said. I felt more glow of euphoria and small tendency to think Oh God here we go again: another extended question-time session. Rightly. Because the African didactic tendency came rapidly to the fore and she began to exchange facts with me. She was from Ghana. From near Kumasi. A student at the local Commercial College. Taking 'A' levels. Aiming to be a barrister. Who was I? What was I doing? Where had I studied? Powerful rapid-fire stuff.

Suddenly she said 'Are you Irish?'

'By ancestry,' I admitted.

'I didn't think you could be English,' she said, 'because of the way you came up without reserve and poured whiskey for me.'

I felt stung mildly to the quick of my Englishness. 'Oh I don't know,' I said, 'I'm not very recently Irish. Not all the English are reserved.'

'It must be because you're Irish,' she said firmly and held out her glass for more. Suddenly, for some reason, delightful but not at the level of conscious admissibility, or consciousness for that matter, we both began to laugh. I poured us both another whiskey.

Of course I had known it must happen. Lily's excursions into impotent exotica were her inalienable right. But any signs of Nolan not hanging around with dark patches under his eyes, drawn-down silent mouth, lonely leaning against doorposts with one brooding eye and one doting one, were challenges to instant intervention. Suddenly she was in our midst.

'Hullo, hullo; hullo, darling,' she said possessively, putting a possessive arm through mine and giving a little squeeze which I knew would end in a long-nailed pinch. It ended in a long-nailed pinch. I refused to register. 'You seem to be enjoying yourselves,' she said. 'How about pitying the workers and lending a helping hand. Those Oriental gentlemen want refills. Come over and meet them and bring some bottles.' She swept up some light ale and went off expecting me to surge in her wake. I made no move. Rose made no move. We raised our glasses. I ignored Lily's beckoning and cross face out of the corner of my eye. (My right eye; the view from the other was obstructed by my nose.)

Rose laughed. 'Won't she be jealous?' she said. Another slightly abacktaking, in tracks stopping, early exposure of African directness. A matter primarily of foreign language vocabulary and style rather than directness of character or social intention? 'Only if she feels her free dinner pail and theatre ticket in danger of being blown out of the window,' I said.

Rose looked serious. 'Don't mock money,' she said. 'Among us we don't think love-talk means anything unless there is evidence in terms of payment. It is only you people who are so rich who can afford to pretend that money doesn't matter. Personal relations without seriousness about money: personal relations peesss.' We both laughed.

'I take the logic of that point of view,' I said, 'though I hadn't thought about it like that before. But.'

'But,' Rose said.

'But,' I said, 'it is not the case in our culture. In our culture for a woman, or a man, to seek material advantage out of a personal relationship, particularly in a hypocritical way, is disapproved. That girl over there is a fully aware member of our culture in that respect and she offends continually.'

Rose fluttered her eyelids. 'Oh Mr. Nolan: words,' she said. And I still can't make out whether that was the African equivalent of 'phooey' or an ironic flattery of the control of English words used. Africans do tend to enjoyment of rhetoric and fluency, and to expressing it openly. On the other hand ambiguity is the staff of life in Africa. Cultivation of ambiguity, recognition of ambiguity, enjoyment of ambiguity.

I shrugged and felt for my flask. Not much left. I shook it. Sudden impulse. 'Let's finish this and go out and find some more,' I suggested.

'Fine,' Rose said, tossing off her glass and holding it out for refilling. 'But won't Father mind?'

'Not a bit,' I said. I looked round for the priest. Ignoring Lily's sulky ignoring of me which was predictably incorporating increased play with leg and breast for the benefit of the captive Asian students. I tracked the poor cleric down in the midst of the Indian pair, a Malayan girl and a

turn to page 75

HIGHLIFE SENTIMENTALE

continued from page 58

characteristically dour and drab-looking East African.

'We're off,' I said.

He left the group. 'You're lucky,' he said. Then he caught sight of Lily. He looked to the door and registered Rose. 'Hey, hey,' he said, 'what's going on?'

'We're off,' I said, 'Lily's quite happy. I'm taking Rose off to the Art Exhibition.'

'Are you sure you know what you're doing?' he asked.

'Come off it,' I said.

He laughed in the shocked way human but old-fashioned priests have. 'Really Peter,' he said, 'but anyway thank you for dropping in.'

'Painless,' I said to Rose.

'Priests,' she said, with withering ambiguity.

I puzzled at that one for about a mile in the car. Which she approved of without any of the scalp-adornment reflexes that Lily showed. Rose admired it as a machine and a sign of money, not as a status symbol which was intended to reflect glory *on her*. Whether that was what she felt or what she wanted me to think she felt, certainly it seemed that way. She had none of Lily's way of denigrating the owner while cannibalising the possession or disguising pleasure or sense of luxury with pain or mockery or teasing complaint.

Rose frankly said: 'What a nice car. How nice for you to have it. It is nice to ride in. It smells nice. How much did you pay for it?' Which was nothing if not bloody refreshing.

What is the matter with too many English girls that they cannot discipline themselves, even if society is against simple spontaneity in almost everything, to express direct delight or curiosity or positive interest? A bizarre feature of our tawdry sophistication and frantic insistence on always being one up on everyone. Language style as genuine reflection of attitudes? God help us.

We stopped at my usual off-licence and I bought a bottle of Powers. Then I drove to Leo's paint show. I stopped.

'What are we doing?' Rose said. A trifle apprehensive. She told me afterwards: 'White man sweet-talk over drink and in car is one thing but being touted about without explanation in a new place among strangers in the dark can seem like a prelude to a *News of the World* case.'

'Don't worry,' I said. 'It's somebody else's etchings not mine.' I regretted that as soon as I'd said it because Rose followed me in with a total trust and incomprehension which made a feeble joke into some sort of cross-cultural insult. That is of course an exaggeration, owing to self-consciousness, but it's what her look made me feel. The thing with Africans seems to be to get over the culturo-semantic misunderstandings, not by silence or hyper-sensibility or over-identification in hectic ways, but by as immediate a contact with shared humanity as possible. Distillation of intuition and experience.

But even at that early point I realised that being made to feel guilty in such matters is only a step or two away from feeling resentment or indifference or impatience. I felt ashamed, excessively no doubt, perhaps naturally under conditions of first exposure to this type of situation, and almost immediately I felt annoyed at being put in a position where I had to watch such 'p's and 'q's and annoyed/ashamed at myself for feeling annoyed and at Rose for bringing the whole neurotic complex into being. The mood stopped there, at the point I was pushing the paint show door open, through a spontaneous exhibition of what I still think of as one of the most lovely African attributes. Reliance on physical contact. I pushed the door, a little inclined to regret the whole expedition, abruptly conscious of Lily's venomous fury in scenes to come, wondering how tediously embarrassing Rose's confrontation with the pictures would be as well as her confrontation with Leo, when she quite naturally and quickly took hold of my hand. Not graspingly or cloyingly but with a simple need for reassurance, which was probably as much responsible as anything for inaugurating any of the spiritual and emotional somersaults I have been doing for the last few years. After five years of holding the hands, wrists, arms, shoulders, necks, legs just above the knees (when sitting) of total strangers as well as intimates, of colleagues, waiters, traders, neighbours, visitors, of both sexes and all ages, I look with simple horror on the flinching dread of contact the English show. Except in certain close degrees of consanguinity or intimacy, except in privacy or in the cheap exhibitionism of public parks. The unco-ordinated shuffling dance of trauma with which the English eschew inadvertent contact in a public transport or crowded place. The inarticulate, embarrassed apologising on *both* sides. In a nation of inhibited puritans (secular variety) all contact is seen as sexual assault. Thank God sanity prevails elsewhere.

Held together in a euphoria of contact not booze, culture and language and worries forgotten, Rose and I came in from the dark, wet, cold English night into the bright, dry, cold English painting exhibition. (That 'into' dependent on the 'in' is deliberate: I happen to mean it and like it. I do not write carelessly.)

KEVIN WOODCOCK

'I knew it was a mistake asking Jeremy to take the wedding photographs'

A terrible dyed-haired bag in flabby purple slacks with off-purple lipstick came over to us. Beneath the pallor of her powder lurked the bony ridges of self-induced unhappiness. Her breath smelt of gin and acid drops. Her eyes were dark pools of constipation and boredom. 'Yes dear,' she said. 'Do you want a catalogue?' Even as I said 'No thanks,' I was embarrassed by the sheer talentlessness in evidence on the walls. Embarrassed for Leo, and his friends; perhaps embarrassed by Leo.

What ghastly art-school training and social insensitiveness could have led to the mounting of an exhibition like this. Muddy formlessness of the sub-Hitchens ilk clashed with sub-Mondrian angularities, sub-Gris oddities, sub-Pollock arabesques, sub-Klee witticisms. Mud, however, definitely prevailed. Which said something for Leo whose work the Mud happened to be.

'I'm looking for Leo,' I said. The tired masochist looked at me, happy, with Rose in one hand, the bottle of Powers in the other, a conviction that God might be in the world after all, surprised by joy, for anything her failures or England's failure could do to me. She pursed her lips. 'Whom should I say, dear?' she said. I had seen a door in the corner. 'Don't bother, dear,' I said and opened the door.

'You might knock,' Leo said. 'What if I'd been wanking or screwing some deliriously lovely fifteen-year-old vicar's daughter.' His eyes opened wide when he saw Rose. Wider when they saw the bottle. 'Glasses, you old cow,' he shouted through the door. The degenerate appeared with the pale shadow of a smile of pleasure on her face. 'Get a bloody move on,' Leo shouted at her as she picked up some far from clean glasses to wash them. 'She likes being shouted at,' he explained, as if it was quite natural. Which in his circles perhaps it was. Rose still held my hand. I introduced them. 'Tell you what,' Leo said. 'Come and sit for me. Starting tomorrow. Or sooner. I like the look of you.'

Rose grinned. 'With no clothes on?' she said.

'Of course,' he said. To me he said: 'Where do you pick them? So lovely. So intelligent. So perceptive. So shameless.'

'How about Lily?' I said. 'Wouldn't you like to use her?'

'Keep Lily,' he said, 'All that coyness and blather and aura of lavishing favours if she so much as gives you good-day.'

The misshapen, technicolor middle-aged crone returned with four moderately clean wet glasses. 'Christ,' Leo said, 'Do we have to live in a monsoon as well as everything else. I have got the word right, haven't I?' he said to Rose.

'I wouldn't know,' she said.

Leo began to roll the glasses rapidly on a large sheet of blotting-paper. I opened the bottle and began to pour. 'Wait a minute,' Leo said. 'Who said you're to have any?'

turn to page 79

HIGHLIFE SENTIMENTALE

continued from page 75

he asked the livid travesty of twentieth-century Bohemian hangers-on. The warning of what might lie ahead of the flower person or hippie-doll without positive internal resources. She cringed smirkingly. 'Go back to the gallery,' he said: 'Where you belong.' She scuttled away leering. 'Ugh,' Leo said, 'My friends' hangers-on.' We knocked back our Powers.

'How's it going?' I asked. 'Numb,' Leo said. 'Art! In a town like this. We were mad to think of it. And anyway the actual exhibits are a disappointment now they're actually in place.' He helped himself to a large whiskey. And plunged bravely on.

'Frankly,' he said, 'I'm particularly worried by the overwhelming evidence on the walls out there of my own authentic, convincing, genuine and sincere lack of talent.' He drank. 'I've decided to scrap all previous manners and create a new synthesis based on Francis Bacon, Dubuffet, the Playmate of the Month and Alfred Munnings. With just a patina from Kandinsky and a tomato from Smith, a couple of lines from Steinberg and a mess of porrage from Epstein, a spacial hint from Matisse, a dab of the draperies from Rosetti, a mystic flower from Redon, a bird from Audubon . . .' He babbled on. I feared an increasingly self-pitying wallow but in fact he cheered himself up considerably before the bottle was finished. And was all for going out to get another until we found it was after closing-time.

We went to our cars.

'Not a happy man,' Rose said.

'An artist in danger of turning into a spoiled artist, or artist manqué,' I said. 'Artist-monkey. Why do you call him that?' Rose said and giggled. I asked her where she lived or was staying or digged. Digged set her off giggling again. I kissed her neck. We kissed.

'It's not our custom, you know,' she said. 'So perhaps I don't know how to do it well.' I attempted to reassure her. 'I don't think I should like it at home,' she said, 'but here it is quite nice. Perhaps it is the climate.' We kissed again.

When I did find out where she was staying, I didn't know how to get there. I suggested we went back to my flat for a mug of something hot and restful and a street map. Rose said she would be delighted. She insisted on fixing the drinks, disapproving of bachelor storage and filing systems, and then wandered round the flat looking at everything. When she came back out of the bedroom, she said: 'I'm too late to go back to my dig' – 'Digs,' I said – 'DigS,' she said: 'because my landlady will become abusive if I go now. Come and fuck me.'

To say that African directness of his hyper-unexpected kind shook my hair on end would be an exaggeration. But I did drop my glass. Rose came and sat by me. 'Don't you like it?' she said. I assured I did. She said she thought I would ever since she had first seen me. She could tell from my eyes. I explained I was just surprised. Rose just giggled. 'For me,' she said, 'it's been a long time. But I like you Mr Peter Nolan. So let's do it.' I thought that little rationalisation put paid to a lot of Western liberal humanist-type objections about sex as personal communion based on love la-la. The moral hang-up of this our own dear praeter-post-Christian outlook never so much as ruffled Rose's surface. 'But, but,' I said. But she got at some of my buttons. Surprise two was her underwear. Not her expected style at all. Old-fashioned, large and woolly. She took a lot of persuading to discard them. Only because she admitted to equal curiosity about seeing what an amorous European's body looked like altogether naked, did she agree in justice that so long as an extra portable heater was brought into the room she would strip herself entirely. I doted straight away and lastingly on her rich golden brown curves, that tight hard dark dark hair, the big partly bluish chocolatey nipples. She looked at me; I looked at her. We touched. Entranced. Then chased and struggled giggling round the bed and all over the bed. Surprise three when was I touched her, as she lay there. Preliminary caresses. However briefly I had an intuition they were going to last. 'No, no,' she said, shocked, 'you mustn't do that. You must use your pennis there.' 'Penis,' I said. 'Penis,' she said. And laughing I used it. Thinking: oho for education: this girl can be taught a thing or two just as she can clearly wake me up, out of cultural and personal twilight, over a thing or two.

'It was a very good school but they had a lousy careers master'

Which in the long term was how it worked out really.

In the morning we were very pleased with each other again. I delivered her to her college with great arrangements to meet, eat, fete, fuck, sleep together later in the day. We parted laughing. She wouldn't kiss me there in case a Nigerian student who was after her saw us and caused trouble. I drove on to school.

Towards the end of break Lily rang. This was her transparent device for punishing while pretending to withhold interest while not wasting too much time before satisfying her lust for a scene. 'I don't know how you have the arrogant nerve to treat me like that . . .' she began.

'Shut up,' I said.

She didn't, so I put the phone down. Three minutes later she rang. Sound of sobs. 'Don't you care for me at all, Peter?'

'Who do you care for?' I asked.

'Oh, darling. I know I'm selfish; I know I make you fed up because I'm not educated or interesting enough, but I do love you. I'll do anything to make you happy with me.' Natural break for sobs. I knew Lily wallowing would have a sting in it somewhere. Brighter voice, playful comeback the next moment: 'I know the way to your heart is through bed. I've decided to give in and give you what you want. It. The whole thing: no bars: all right darling darling?' This capitulation was too sudden. It spelt two things: Lily ditching Peter and rapidly too, without bothering to tragedy it out in the usual three acts with encores; while at the same time wanting to preserve all the appearances, however temporarily. Abruptly it clicked. She didn't want to lose face by not going to the University dance at which *she* would find any number of cock-teasable semi-intellectuals with reasonable grants, or salaries, and even one or two with cars and private incomes in whose favour she would then and there be well able to ditch me publicly, resoundingly, righteously, hurtfully, and finally.

'Sorry, Lily,' I said. 'I've got a partner for the University dance.' She gasped and slammed down her receiver.

'All over?' Leo said. 'And about time too. The darky will do much better.'

I threw a pile of unmarked biology exercise books over him and left for class.

* * *

That minor happy ending has exploded, as is usual in the dynamic, or flux, of experience, into a series of subsequent peaks and troughs, pleasures and frustrations and sadnesses and joys. Rose and I parted and met again, loved and survived, as easily almost as we had first come together. She is going to marry a lawyer here and we pretend we scarcely know each other.

As I sit at my desk under the ceiling fan, lazily waiting for Rebecca, my current Rose, to bring me whatever she's been doing in the kitchen for the past fifteen minutes, I feel, not that I am in paradise, but that I shall never want to exchange African realities for the ersatz theories, neuroses and developments of richer and more powerful temperate zone arms-race circuses. Duties: to teach, to learn, to experience, to appreciate, to help, to record perhaps. Doubts: the fox without his brush, and that old Christian lingerer, so futile and so deep under the skin, should happy, sensually ecstatic relationships be so acceptedly casual as they are here? I know that Rebecca, her lovely body free under the cover cloth, eager, good humoured, self-effacing, will leave me when her parents call her to marry. She may try to find someone for me to take her place. She may not. Meanwhile she is here and so sweetly, easily, by Western religious or humanist standards so unforgivably, enough and better than enough.

She seems to like me well enough too. She finds me curious, funny and touching. Which is quite all right by me. We don't kiss but we do play. We like it like that. It seems to make life worth something at last.

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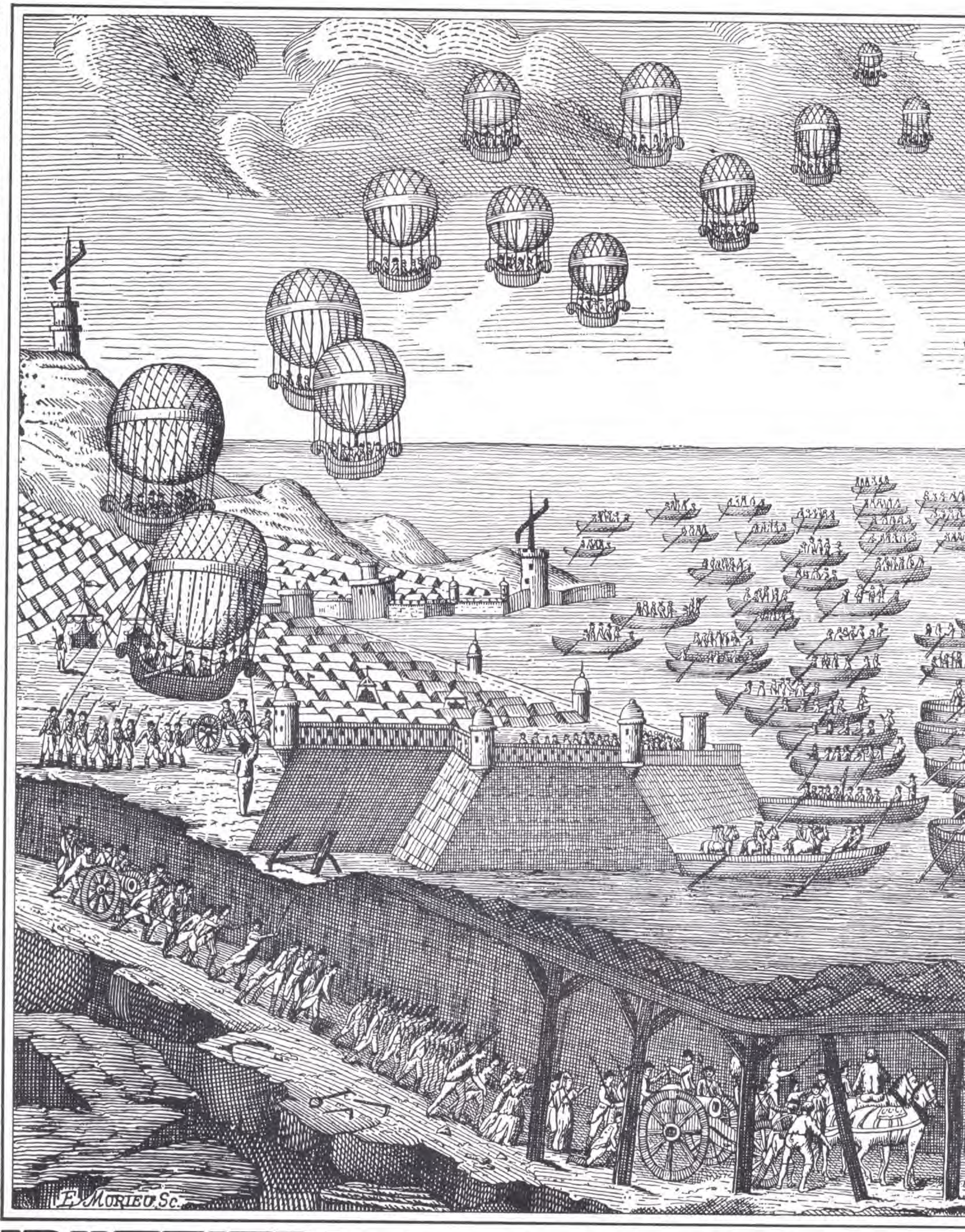
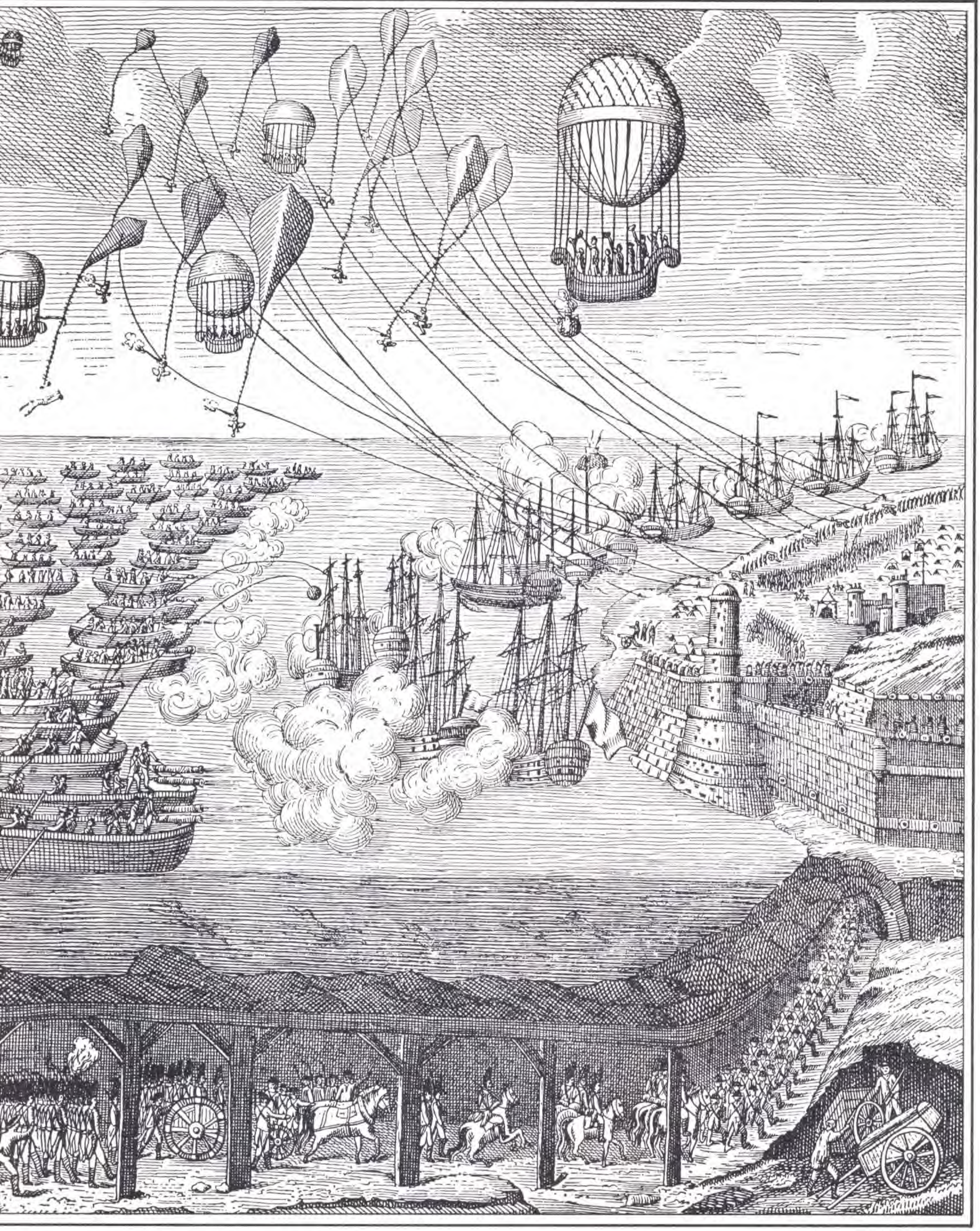


INVASION!

Ian Penn examines Napoleon phobia and reveals the amazing artefacts devised to stop the alien hordes

Pictured above: a French artist's vision in 1803 of England being overrun by the French



Rarely has such a farce caused such panic. As the winter clouds obscured the moon, a few boatloads of French convicts scrambled onto the south coast of Wales. Their aim: to take over Britain. By the next day, 23 February 1797, most of the invasion force was hopelessly drunk on looted wine. And their commander, one William Tate, a former lieutenant in the American artillery, had surrendered unconditionally to a very much smaller squad of English militia. England had been at war with France for four years, and in London news of the invasion attempt caused mass consternation. There was a run on the banks and

George III sent a message of 'particular thanks' to those who had taken part in the thwarting of the intruders.

Up and down the country meetings were held to celebrate the victory. And time and time again the question was asked: How had the French managed to land their men in the country in the first place?

The drunks, one section of what was originally intended by the French generals to have been a three-pronged attack, had sparked off the first real bout of a malaise the inhabitants of Britain were to know well by 1940: invasion fever.

Who could tell where and by what means the next landing would be made? Rabble-rousers ranted and ordinary people shuddered. From printing presses all over the country poured forth a veritable flood of tracts and engravings, playlets and verse, all on the invasion theme.

'Does haughty Gaul invasion threat?' asked Robert Burns. 'Then let the louns beware, Sir!'

By October of the same year Napoleon had been given charge of the invasion forces. As French invasion plans became more elaborate, so too did English rumours of their shape and form.

English prints showed the most extraordinary contrivances reputed to have been designed for the invasion of England. The most widely publicised of these was a great raft nearly half a mile long.

An English seaman had returned from France and reported: 'A kind of flotilla is being built, constructed of nine old ships, lashed together with cables, covered with a platform, on which is a raised battery to be mounted with 500 cannon and to carry 20,000 men. There are to be steam engines to propel it, with wheels to go in the water.' Other accounts stated this leviathan to be powered by windmills. And in no time the print makers were turning out their impressions of the amazing craft.

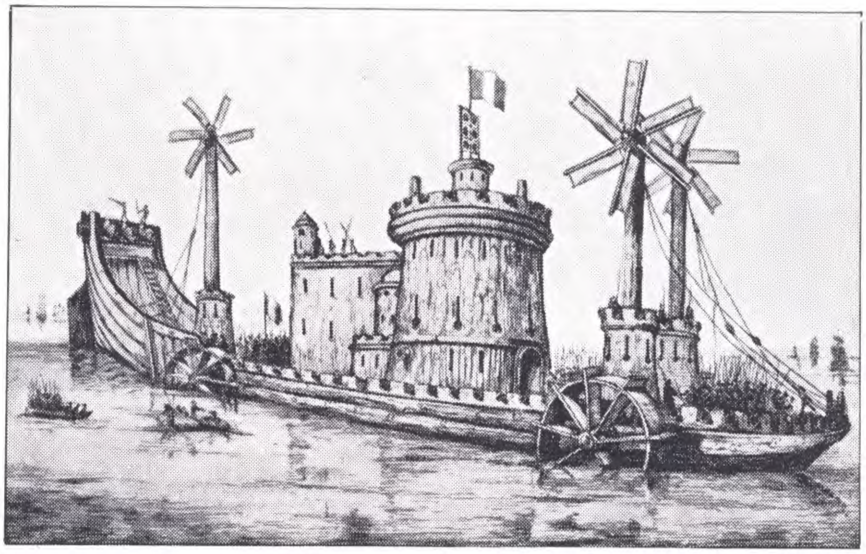
This was the age of Watt and the French Revolution, of Montgolfier balloons and machine breakers. For many, economic instability and the spectre of insurrection at home, combined with the threat of militarism abroad and an emergent technology provided all the ingredients of a nightmare. The way in which news travelled slowly and rumour spread like wildfire served only to worsen the situation.

Other prints depicted troop-carrying balloons loaded with cavalry and infantry in the act of passing over Dover Castle.

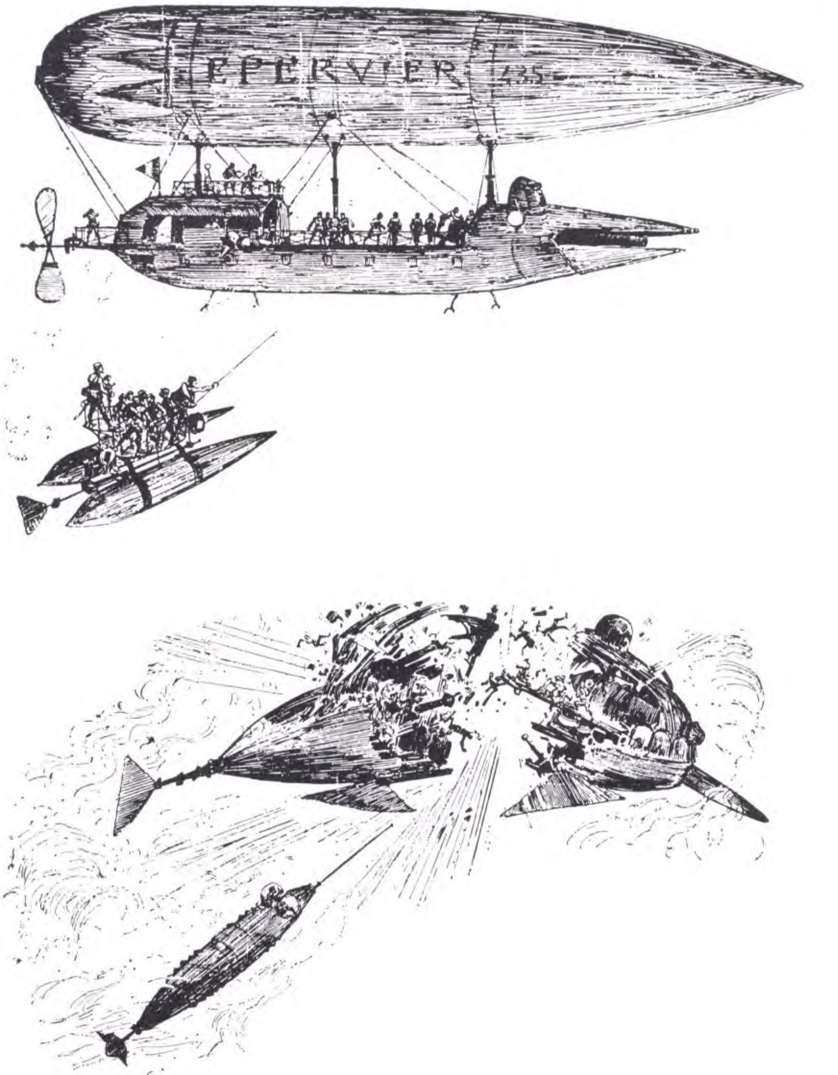
And others conjured up visions of the French army swarming towards England by means of a Channel tunnel, while above fleets of ships advanced and armed balloons descended. For the first time, the fear of aerial attack entered the public mind.

True, there were the newly-built cannon-laden Martello towers, by now dotted all over the south coast, and still to be seen today, but even they, despite their beacons and semaphore, would be helpless against such methods. (The word Martello, incidentally, is a corruption of Martella, in Corsica, where a similar tower was successfully used during a siege in 1794.)

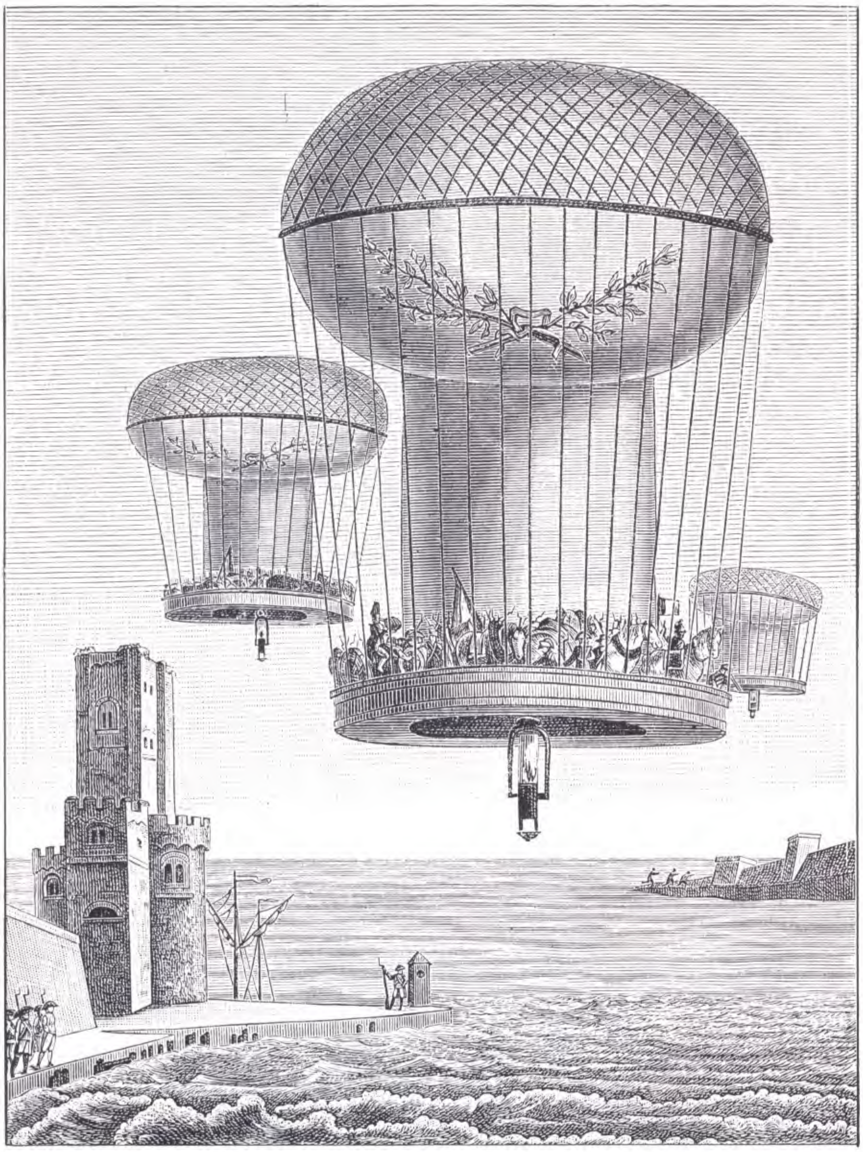
While the engravings indicated the means



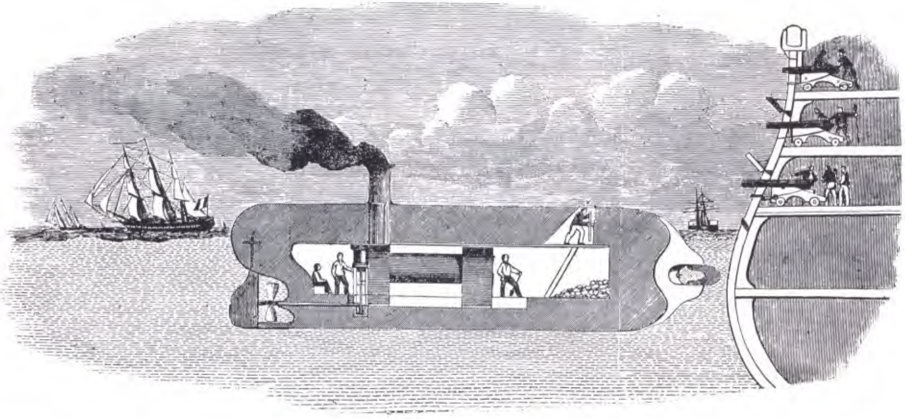
Throughout the 19th Century fear of invasion caused a stream of weird devices of war to be dreamed up. Some were designed by enterprising engineers to repulse invaders. Others, like 'Napoleon's Great Invasion Raft,' above, were said to be in enemy hands



By the 1880s there were frighteningly accurate predictions of weapons that might be used by nations to conquer. In 1887 a French artist showed a tender ferrying troops to an aerial carrier, above, and a successful attack by a one-man submarine, below



English fears of being overrun by Napoleon's hordes were hardly assuaged by pictures of possible invasion machines published in French newspapers. French readers were told in 1805 that the balloon above, shown over Dover Castle, could carry 3,000 men



Just one of many contraptions devised by English engineers to beat off invaders was James Nasmyth's 'Floating Mortar'. The design, unveiled in 1852, allowed for a crew of four and single self-exploding shell for planting on the bows of invading ships

by which the enemy might arrive, pamphlets and plays attempted to describe what might happen when they got here.

The *Anti-Jacobin* in 1798 gave excerpts from a play running in Paris about a successful invasion of England. As the French army marched on London their commander was pictured shouting:

'Englishmen! Now is your time to destroy the British Government, which has caused all your misfortunes, desolated your neighbours and set Europe on fire.'

Another anti-French publication, the *Anti-Gallican*, published in 1804 what it called an 'An Invasion Sketch':

'General Bonaparte made his public entrance into the Capital over London Bridge, upon a charger from HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S stables at Hanover, preceded by a detachment of Mamelukes.

'He stopped upon the bridge a few seconds to survey the number of ships in the river; and beckoning to one of his Aide-de-camps, ordered the French flag to be hoisted above the English – the English soldiers on board, who attempted to resist the execution of this order, were bayoneted, and thrown overboard'.

As it happened, the real-life Napoleon had by this time given up all serious intentions of an invasion of England, because he simply couldn't afford sufficient troops from other fronts. He wrote: 'We should give up any real attempt to invade England and content ourselves with the appearance of it.'

The 'appearance' was quite sufficient. It had the tactical advantage of keeping British troops tied down and it kept invasion fever on the boil. 'Boney' became the national hate figure and the monster of nursery rhyme, the archetypal 'bogeyman.'

A pamphlet published in 1803 titled *Address to the People of Great Britain and Ireland on the Threatened Invasion* detailed the horrors to be expected from Boney and his men:

'They let loose their troops with resistless fury, to commit the most horrible excesses, and to pillage, burn and desolate, without mercy, and without distinction.

'But the practice to which I particularly allude will make your blood freeze in your veins. These wretches are accustomed, whenever they prevail, to subject the women to the most brutal violence, which they perpetrate with an insulting ferocity, of which the wildest savages would be incapable.

'Will you, my Countrymen, while you can draw a trigger, or handle a pike, suffer your daughters, your sisters, and wives, to fall into the power of such monsters?'

The same pamphlet, in equally lurid terms, described incidents alleged to have taken place during the abortive invasion attempt in Wales six years earlier:

'A peasant whom they had compelled to assist them in landing their stores, presumed to ask for some compensation, upon which the commanding Officer drew a pistol, and SHOT THE POOR FELLOW THROUGH THE HEART.

'Two officers went to a house, in which a woman was in child-bed, attended by her mother, who was upwards of Seventy

turn to page 51

INVASION!

continued from page 31

Years old. The French brutes tied the husband with cords, and, in his presence, defiled both the wife and the mother!!!'

On a more sophisticated level, the brilliant caricaturist James Gillray issued the same warning. His engraving *Promised Horrors of the French Invasion* showed French troops barbarously slaughtering the inhabitants of London and Pitt bound ready for execution.

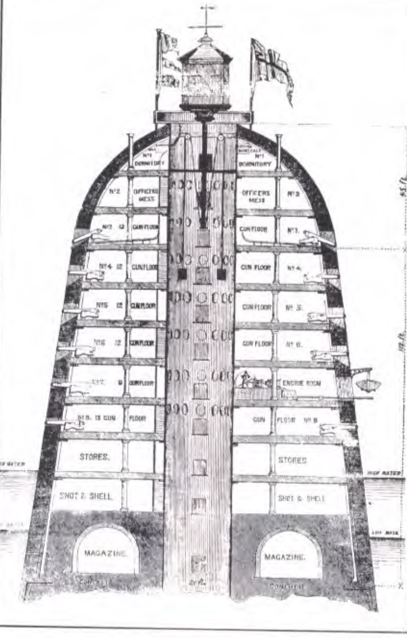
One of the most remarkable invasion rumours was that the newly-built Edwardes Square, Kensington, at that time just outside the western gate to London and today a fashionable place to live, had in fact been planned for Napoleon's occupation forces. A full enquiry was held in 1811, but no evidence was found to support the suggestion.

Even after the final defeat of Napoleon, still the pamphlets appeared: *The Invasions and Projected Invasions of England, On the Defence of England, System of National Defence, The Defensive Position of England, A Memoir on the Defence of East Suffolk* and many others.

A new factor had cruised into the military arena: the steam ship. Many at once sensed that the new age of steam would mean an end to British naval supremacy. And some felt that the invention of the steam ship had made the war against Napoleon a very close-run thing.

Robert Southey, the poet and biographer of Nelson, wrote in 1829: 'If steam ships had been rendered manageable only ten years earlier – nay, even a less time – our deadly struggle with Buonoparte must have been decided upon British soil; and in that case London might easily have shared the same fate as Moscow.'

In 1848 the Duke of Wellington himself wrote: 'If it be true that the exertions of the fleet are not sufficient to provide for our defence, we are not safe for a week after the declaration of war.'



Plan for the Impregnable Iron Fortress

And the anti-invasion inventors were at it again. No contrivance, however apparently crazy or odd, was considered unworthy of serious consideration.

Typical of the new steam deterrents was Nasmyth's anti-Invasion Floating Mortar. The design was unveiled in 1852.

Described as 'A New Implement of Destruction,' it was to be a semi-submarine vessel designed to destroy invading ships by planting a large self-exploding shell on their bows below water level.

The Floating Mortar could only carry a single shell at a time, and quite how its four-man crew was to avoid the blast was never fully explained. But its designer, Mr James Nasmyth, assured: 'No ship that has ever been built, whether of wood or iron, could survive the fearful hole which a monster shell would thus produce.

'This class of vessel is chiefly designed for *defence against invasion*, and would not have to act against an enemy, probably, at greater distances than one or two miles from our shore, so that it could easily return for another shell.'

One of the most spectacular Victorian designs for an anti-invasion device was Mr William John Hall's Impregnable Iron Fortress. The design was submitted to the Prince Consort and put on display at the Royal Society in 1860.

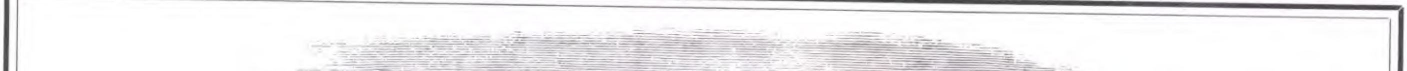
This monstrous bell-shaped structure – 240 feet high, 120 feet in diameter at high water mark and weighing 110,000 tons – was to be equipped with seventy cannon and was to sit, one on the Nore, Goodwin and Maplin Sands.

With a shell-proof two foot-thick iron wall, it was to have a lighthouse on top, its own artesian well and be heated by steam passing through hollow columns supporting ten floors. The garrison would be 1,500.

Mr Hall added: 'I suggest the propriety and social policy of training a thousand destitute lads from our streets into useful members of society, as sailors, engineers or mechanics.'

Right through the 19th Century, up to the First World War and beyond, the invention of fascinating and unusual devices to keep out invaders continued.

Yet behind it all there is one happy irony: the last invasion force to set foot on the mainland of Britain was William Tate and his band of a thousand convicts in 1797.



In 1860 Hall's Impregnable Iron Fortress was 'guaranteed' to devastate any invading fleet. But it never got off the drawing board

THE GENTLEMANLY ART

Brian O'Hanlon draws on long and bitter experience to

When my wife did me the favour of making me a bachelor again I repaired to an elegant bed sitter above the Turkish Baths in Jermyn Street. The confinement of my living quarters was more than absolved by the fact that I lived in St. James's across the road from Fortnum's and had a Whitehall telephone number. Barrington Court was also great for 'birding' as there was only enough room for a large bed and nowhere else to sit down. I had paid the porter a pound to take away the easy chairs immediately I moved in.

I used to sneak out the back door down the fire escape to ask a man in the Turkish Bath's kitchens deep below to bring up tea and toast. He would don a white jacket which had been stolen from United Dairies, as was evident by its lapel emblem, put on a tie and totter up the stairs, enter my flat and crash the tray down on the solitary table therein, saying: 'Will dat be all yer Lordship?'

Two things happened.

My helpful manservant left and they introduced all figure dialling so my Whitehall exchange number became a miserable '930'.

Then again, just *everyone* had started to sing bawdy rugby ballads and when some yobboe from Newcastle, down in London for a soccer match, sung the saga of Lady Jane and Jermyn Street to me one Saturday night in the little Chequers pub around the corner I knew it was time to leave the district.

I didn't really want to share a flat again with anybody; man, woman or budgerigar, so when Vivian St. Claire Brogden asked me if I'd like to share with Hairy and him in Earl's Court I wasn't all that keen at first. As it turned out I wasn't all that keen at last either.

Brogden was one of those characters always on the verge of bankruptcy and unemployment whose brinkmanship never ceased to amaze the drinking cognoscenti of Kensington who were quite piqued they had to work and more to the point, be *seen* to work. The two had taken the lease on a basement mansion block four bedroomed flat near Earl's Court Station and needed a third person to share, i.e., to enable them to live in such an economic state that Brogden could declare a profit to his other shareholder upon each succeeding quarter day.

'Well come and see me at the flat. Let's talk about it,' said Brogden. I dropped by one afternoon to tell the Head Porter I would be around to see Mr St. Claire Brogden that evening and would he please let him know.

'Why don't you tell him yourself, Sir' he replied. 'He's in.' 'What?' I said: 'It's four o'clock in the afternoon.' 'Quite so, Sir,' replied Hedges: 'But it's rather early for Mr Brogden. I think you will find him still – ahem – in bed. I know he hasn't been out yet because I've had to move his car six times. He usually leaves it double parked in the middle of the road. Says it's much easier for me to find that way.'

I went downstairs to No. 1 and hammered at the door without reply. Hedges, who had quietly followed me down spoke again: 'May I suggest Sir . . . ahem . . . another channel of communication? The window.' 'The window?' 'Yes sir. If you will come with me through the staff lanes I will take you there.' I followed Hedges until we came to a corner window, barred like the rest, but with the bars pulled aside – rather reminiscent I thought of 'High Noon' at the Monkey House. I entered a room of total darkness. A groan greeted me. 'What time is it?' 'It's four'. 'Oh, that's all right. I thought it was *late*.'

Vivian St. Claire Brogden arose from his cot and said he felt unwell. I trudged after him down to the kitchen. The rooms were high, wide and furnished with some good period pieces. In the kitchen we sat either side of a large polished wooden bench table. 'Great Aunt Emily's,' said Brogden. 'Her servants used to prepare all the food upon it.' In the corner stood a very old 'fridge. 'It's gas. Belonged to my Uncle. They don't make them like that any more.' I appeared to be sitting upon a sleeping bag. 'You are' said Brogden. 'Belonged to McGrath. Friend of Parched Davis. Came over together from New Zealand. McGrath was thick. He was also unemployed. Couldn't pay the rent so he decorated the flat in lieu and used to sleep in the bath in that sleeping bag. Got used to it aboard ship. Never slept out of a bath since. He was a lazy bugger so when it was time for his monthly bath he didn't have far to go, if you see what I mean.'

Parched Davis was leaving the flat because he'd rented a room with a massive double bed which would have to be dismantled to be moved. Parched birding capacity was such that he was aghast at the thought of this seven foot bed broken up in disuse for even a week. The bed wouldn't come to him. So Parched went to the bed. So too did the distaff colony of his London friends. Parched then had no further need for his

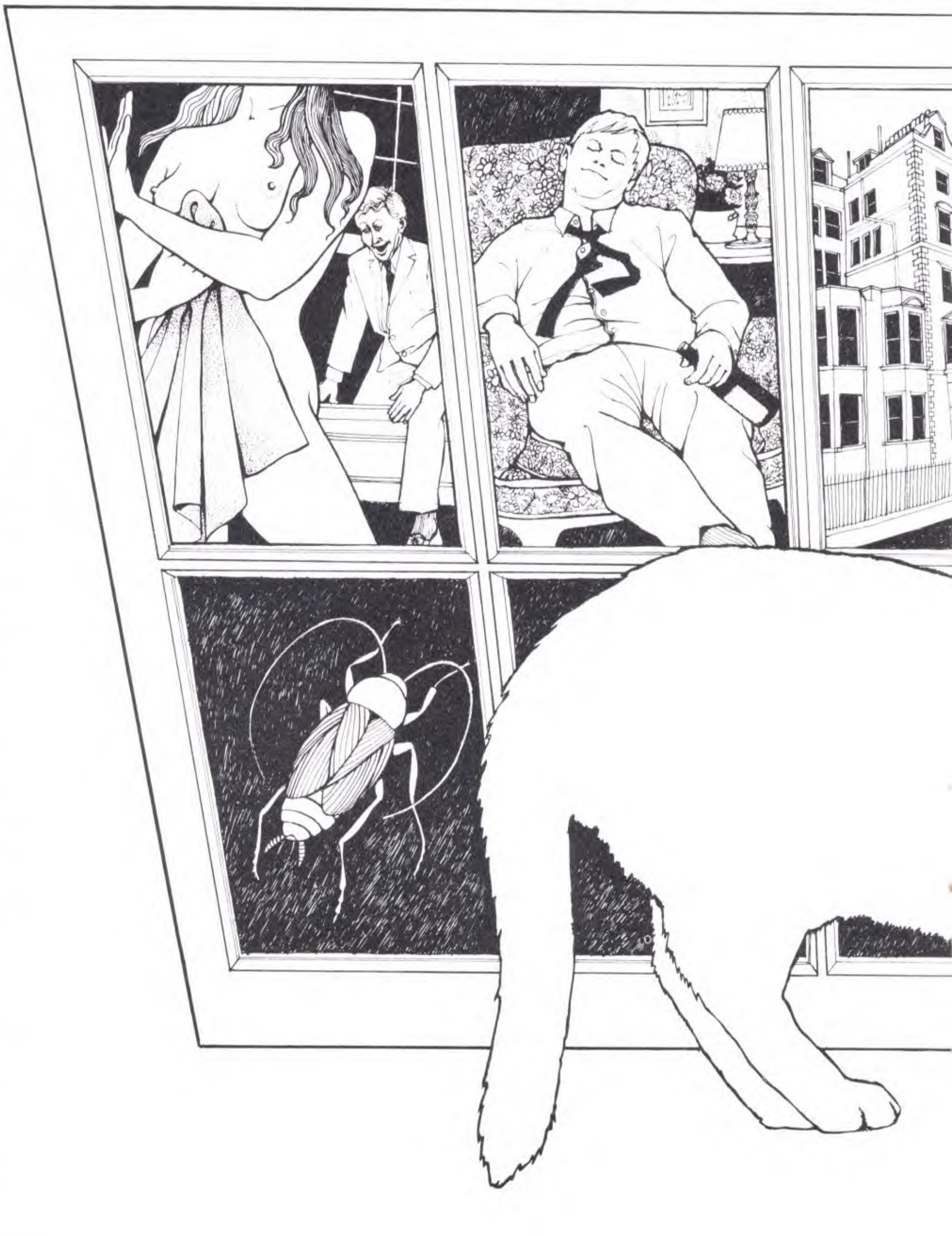


ILLUSTRATION BY RICHARD JACOBS

OF BACHELOR FLATTING

trace the peaks and pitfalls of flat living in London

'Bang Wagon' – a Volkswagen minivan which he used to drive to car parks in the Home Counties when he was anxious to enlarge his ever growing circle of admirers. He sold it to McGrath for a tenner. McGrath bought an old bath from some scrap dealer for ten bob, put it in the back of the van, and until he went home to New Zealand they all lived happily until then in the middle of an apple farmer's biggest field in Kent; McGrath appearing twice a week to ask the farmer's wife if she would bring back his National Assistance along with her groceries from the town.

'Let's talk about it in the pub,' said Brogden. 'I'll just go and get my dressing gown.' To my astonishment, he re-appeared wearing it and said: 'Are you ready?' 'Like *that*,' I said, amazed. ''Course. Why not?' We entered 'The Scarsdale' and Brogden sat down on the radiator. ''Evening loveliness,' he said to a gaping dolly bird. 'Two pints Guv'ner. Mr O'Hanlon's paying. I haven't any money. I'm broke.' We left the pub at closing time. Brogden had 'borrowed' a bottle of port. We went back to the flat and finished it. 'Good night,' said Brogden. 'I'm very tired. I've had a hectic day. I think I shall go to bed. Please don't make too much noise as you leave. You might wake Hairy up.

So it was in the late November of '67 I arrived aboard a battered truck at Kensington Mansions. Instead of SW1, I was SW5. 'It's not quite as good as W8, which is the other side of the Cromwell Road,' said Brogden: 'but our end of the road is civilised and Dr. Bannister, the runner chap, lives in our block.'

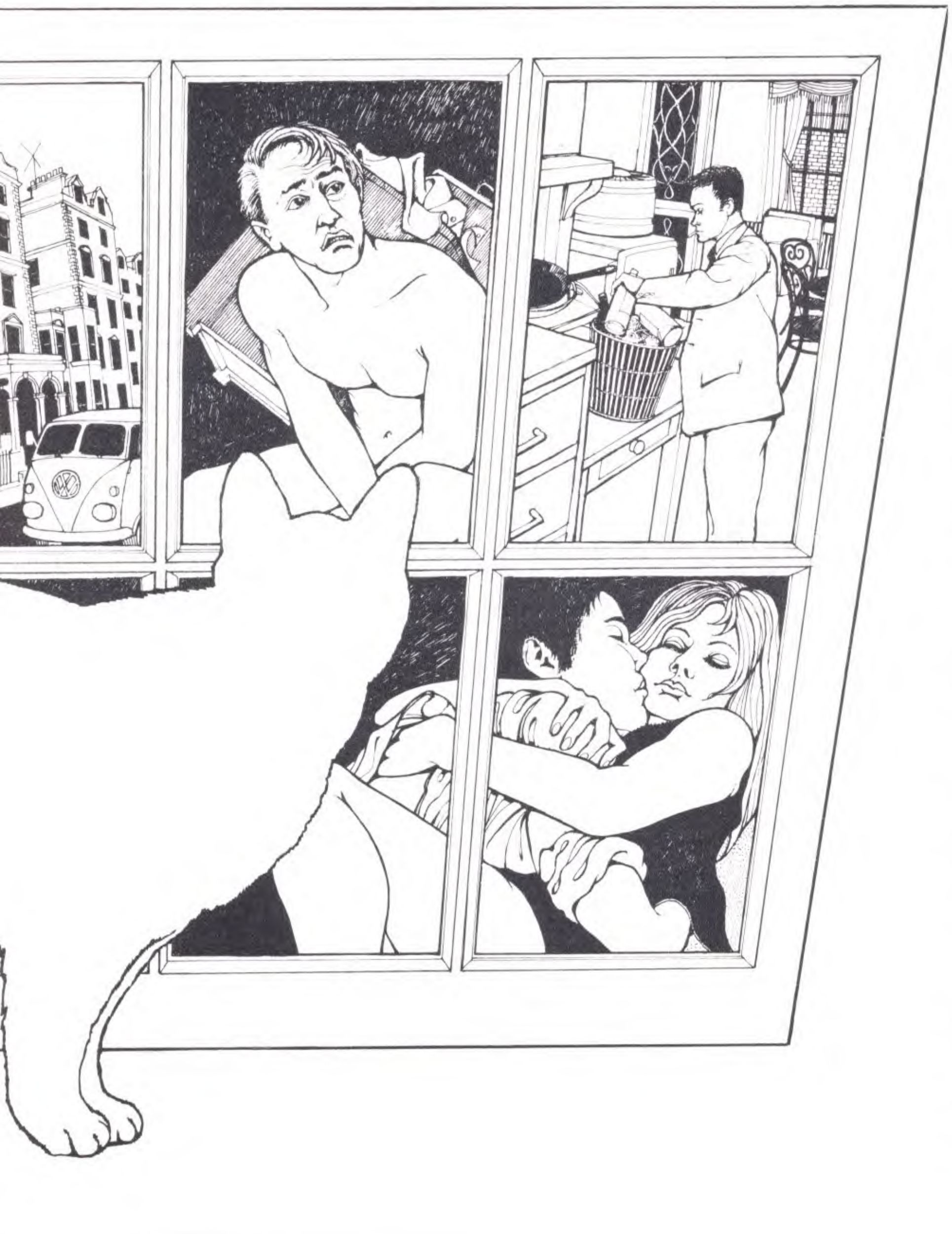
There is something so self pitiful about moving. One's goods and possessions are unceremoniously dumped betwixt and between and I arrived at Brogden's in a most depressed state of mind. Parched Davis had moved out the night before; two single beds of uneven length had been slung together with sheets that didn't fit and the curtains looked like stage properties from 'East Lynne'. Pencilled above the marble fireplace – long since bricked in – was a telephone number and a girl's name. Some rather educated fist had scrawled an addendum: 'Goes like shit off a shovel.' I finished my unpacking – Brogden promised fresh curtains and a large double bed – and was drifting into that delicious semi-comatose state when there was an almighty crash as the front door slammed back on its hinges. I came to quivering. Heavy breathing was interspersed by thumps and crashings of varying decibels. It came along the passage outside my room, my door swung open and a figure swayed uncertainly on the threshold. It was Hairy. He teetered to the rickety aged armchair in the corner, fell in it and passed out. In the morning I came to with a feeling that I was being asphyxiated. The room smelt of 'High & Dry' and Hairy was blissfully snoring his head off still in the chair.

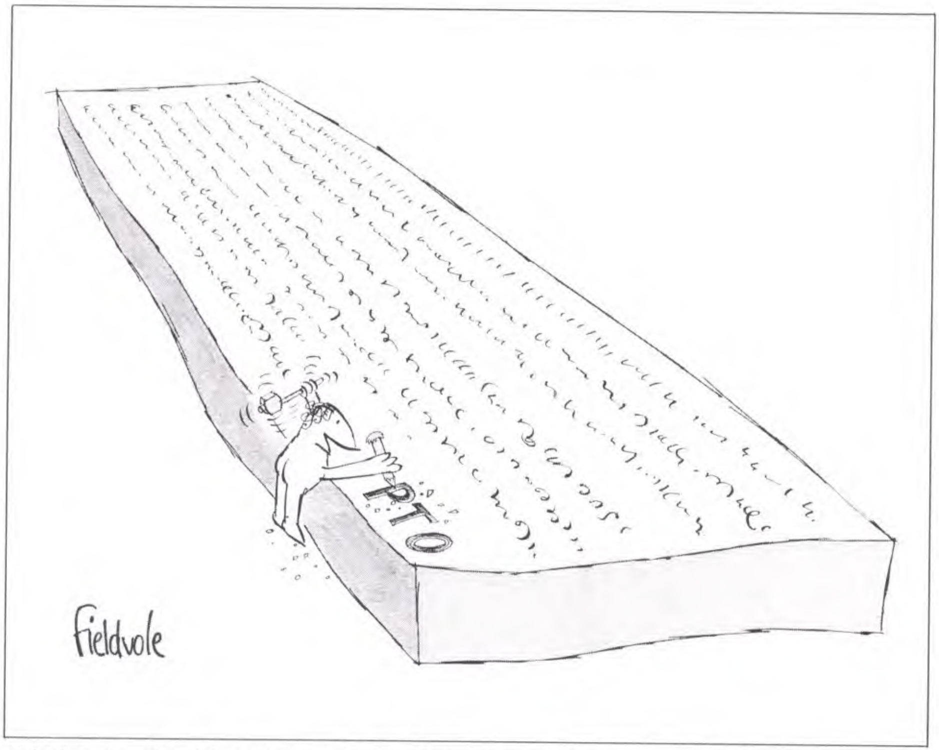
'Any more of this and I'm leaving,' I told Brogden balefully. 'Bloody place is a madhouse.' 'Just relax,' said Brogden who was busy dabbing himself with drops of water from his all-purpose sponge in the bathroom. It's all going on. I don't think Hairy's going to be very well when he wakes up.'

The difficulty appeared to be getting everyone in the flat together to discuss 'House Rules' – as Brogden euphemistically called them. To get everyone together sober and in an intelligent state of mind was even more difficult. After the second month, when I had threatened withholding my rent cheque, it was managed.

Brogden sat at the head of Great Aunt Emily's kitchen table and ferreted around in its end drawer for a couple of soap coupons which were placed carefully upon the table, blank sides upwards. 'Right,' he said and wrote 'House Rules' at the head of the first coupon. Hairy's bleary eyes focused: 'Let's have a fucking gin.' 'Right' said Brogden. 'And hurry up,' added Hairy: 'Manchester United are on the box in ten minutes.'

'Rule 1,' wrote Brogden; 'No "knocking-off" in the drawing room and study'. 'I never bloody well touched her,' roared Hairy. 'You can't bring a bird into the flat and straight into your bedroom. They can go off you that way.' 'Rule 2,' said Brogden, ignoring him: 'The privacy of the individual's bedroom is to be respected. If anybody comes in to my room when I'm on the job I'll thump him.' 'And add to that,' shouted Hairy: '. . . the shouting of coarse remarks outside the bedroom door. You were bloody rude Brogden when I had that air hostess back last Tuesday. You came in roaring drunk and bellowed: "Hairy's on the short strokes again. Wonder who it is this time"!' 'Rule 3,' continued Brogden, utterly impervious: 'Noise. No noise coming in late at night and consideration for those still in bed in the morning.' 'And the rest of the day presumably,' said Hairy sarcastically. Hairy was relieved of his food-buying job for the flat. Brogden pointed out that he only bought food when he was drunk and then only what he fancied –





pointing to the 15 cartons of 'Cracker Barrel' cheese in the 'fridge and 11 large-sized jars of marmite in the pantry.

'And another thing' said Brogden, now well on the offensive: 'What happens to the 24 pints of milk we apparently drink each week, Hairy?' A vote of 'No confidence' was passed. Hairy refused to accept the censure motion, poured himself a very large 'High & Dry' and went into the drawing room to watch Manchester United. Brogden swigged a triple measure port down. 'I can't stand argument,' he uttered with conviction: 'Let's go up the pub.'

I had been rather reticent about bringing girlfriends back for carnal knowledge-ability. I have noticed this about birds before. Own a flat unto yourself and there's no problem. Move into one with flat-mates and you're in trouble. 'I'm not coming back *there*,' they'll screech – fully aware that all and sundry in the parish know the score anyway.

The lady I first took back to my new flat had a problem. A husband. A husband who was deeply suspicious who seemed to spend most of his time finding out where she was. We tiptoed into the flat at 9. All was quiet and just as quietly we went into bed. We were parted from our passion by a sudden bellow from the direction of the drawing room: 'Come on, the lads! Come on Yew-nited! Great stuff, Georgie boy. Oh! Easy, easy, easy . . . GOAL . . . great . . . yarooh . . . !'

I had picked a night when Manchester United were being televised again.

If you have ever tried to make love against the roar of a football commentary with a lunatic supporter leaping up and down in the next room you will readily appreciate that the lady's ardour instantly abated and I was given a very hard time. After much talking and cajoling – the match finished and the flat silent – things were getting beautifully back to normal. At the crucial point a foot came over the window ledge. The lady screamed. And screamed and screamed. I was flung – if you will forgive the expression – like a jockey out of the saddle straight out of bed onto the floor. Madam was standing starkers screaming: 'It's Charles, my husband. I know it is. He'll KILL me . . .' I was clutching myself in great pain with my head bashed against the linen basket when the foot on the windowsill was followed by the body of Brogden. 'Hello, hello, hello, kiddies. Did I disturb you? Forgot my key. Knew O'H always keeps his window open. Ta-ta. Good Night!' I staggered to my feet in fury just as Madam leapt into action with the bedside biscuit tin. She hurled it in Brogden's direction – only I was in between.

There's not a man sharing a flat with other men who hasn't been reduced to nagging like an old woman. Taken out of context, i.e., out of the flat, it sounds churlish to a degree and positively petty in the extreme to hear grown men whittling on about who didn't do the washing up last night and heated accusations of food pilfering being bandied about. But human nature being what it is, this is all very inevitable. It goes without saying that our flat was exceptionally inevitable.

'I do wish someone would dip the silver cutlery occasionally,' Brogden would moan, to deaf ears. 'Christ! Who's been putting tea leaves into the waste bucket without putting newspaper around the sides first?' Hairy would demand. 'I'm fed up cleaning this sodding bath every bloody time before I get into it!' I would fume. Each man has his own pet bete-noire about the flat which he uses in the form of counter accusation when railed upon by other flat cohabitants with their own.

Brogden would take to leaving notes upon Aunt Emily's table headed 'Everybody' and signed V.B. Depending upon our state of humility we would either scrawl 'Sorry' and put our own initials under the complaint or else just scrawl: 'Bollocks' right across it.

We were never alone in the flat. Even when girls were absent from all our bedrooms we had to contend with the 'Phantom Tom' and 'Dimogenes'. The 'Phantom Tom' got his name because I denied his existence in spite of the sworn affidavits of the other two flat members who had witnessed this stray ginger tomcat getting into the flat through an open window and urinating in the middle of Hairy's bedroom. I am a fresh air fiend. The other two were not and I detected a rather sophisticated ploy in the air. Brogden and Hairy would rush around, closing windows I had flung open twitching their nostrils to the heavens and hissing in unison: 'Cats'. 'Dimogenes' and his battalion were the flat's cockroaches. They were very healthy and king-sized. In fact, they were the biggest and healthiest in the entire block of flats. Brogden used to drown them by dropping them down the loo and flushing it.

It was because of 'Dimogenes' that the flat eventually split up. Hairy's girlfriend became his fiancée when she refused to come into the flat any more 'If I see another cockroach we're through,' she hissed at Hairy en route to his bedroom. Hairy, with quickness of mind, overtook her at his bedroom door, ushered her in behind him in time to crush three 'troopers' underfoot who had until then been performing a minuet on the bedside carpet.

Marriage was in the air and Brogden fell hopelessly in love. The only way he could afford marriage was to sell me the furniture and transfer the lease in my name. I thus became the owner of a faulty Chinese carpet valued at £14, two chamber pots at 7/6 apiece, a Georgian style mahogany bow front sideboard valued at £50 and a holocaust of other items including a cracked port decanter and half a dozen beds of assorted sizes.

In bachelor flats the furniture is usually handed down from leaseholder to leaseholder. Some of it is still owned by previous leaseholders who tend to drop by and endeavour to claim it. When I assumed control I soon had claimants in touch who had got wind of the change. McGrath wrote to me from Wellington for his sleeping bag and an inscribed copy of *Mr. Widgeree's Aborigines*. Fletcher the Lecher – the leaseholder prior to Brogden – said could we have a drink and discuss the pink carpet in Hairy's bedroom and Beaky Yates worried aloud about the four pairs of nylon socks he'd lent Brogden to play tennis.

I issued a public disclaimer in the 'Scarsdale' about being responsible for past inhabitants' debts and, as far as most people are aware, the pad is mine.

When I say 'most people' I do not include myself. Brogden visits from his country marital domain most Mondays and, in a calculated display of independence, brings his own sheets with him and I have already been given a tenth-hand message from Hairy to the effect that he left two pairs of pink sheets in the guest room 'just in case' he and his wife miss the last train from town.

PAULA

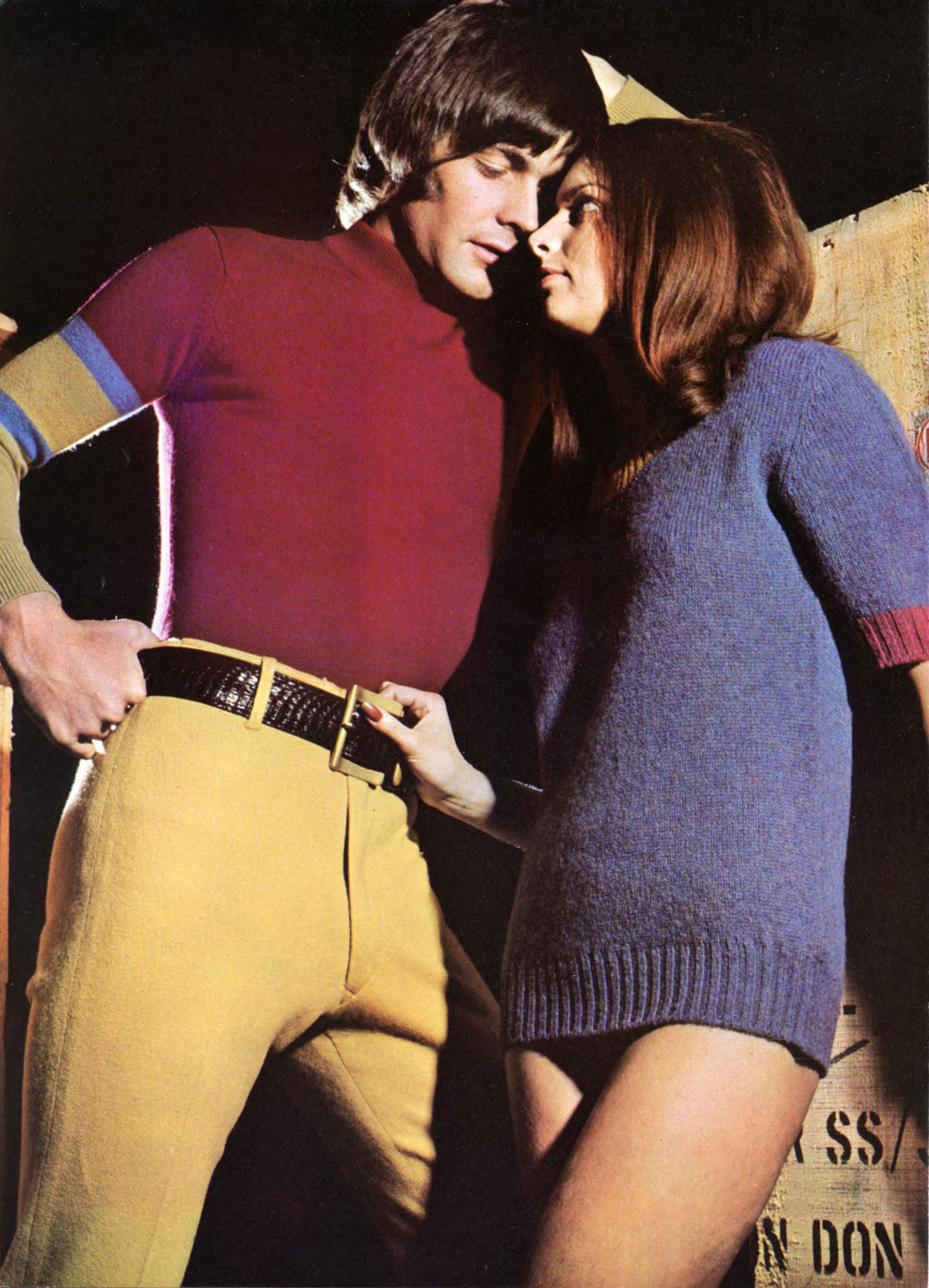
Riding a tube train from the bed sitter belt at Earls Court towards the office blocks of the city, you might chance upon her just before nine in the morning, squeezed in amongst the commuters. If she catches your eye she might smile. Beneath her short fur coat where it swells gently forward you will detect the rounded softness that defines her physical Monroeish quality. Her nose tilts upwards like her nipples do when they harden. Her hair feathers slightly in the draught from the doors but she will not lacquer it. Mainly because they're out of fashion and other girls wear long midis, Paula Merton wears a mini-dress with the hem close to the tops of her thighs. It is well worth riding into town in the same compartment but you may have trouble getting a viewing seat.

For Paula, being a temporary secretary is a complete way of life. She chooses where she works and after a short spell moves on, not through boredom or unease but to meet people who interest her, seeking a constant variety of things to do. 'I once worked in a shipping firm for two weeks and managed to get their freight orders for two ships completely mixed up. There must have been two very puzzled Captains in the Indian ocean wondering where on earth they were supposed to be going and thinking head office had gone mad. I was only there a short time and nobody had the heart to blame me. It seems funny, now.'

Some Saturday afternoons you will find her quietly on a pavilion verandah watching cricket, sitting at a small table with friends and a drink. She will be wearing a cotton summer dress, perhaps distracting the square leg umpire when the breeze blows under the verandah railings. Later she will cut cucumber sandwiches as men in white shirts and trousers wearing grass-grazed pads stand around discussing the day's play and glancing at her legs. Saturday evening will be a pub by the river where small lights hang in the trees and Sunday will be long drives through the country or a splash of her 36–24–37 in a one piece bathing suit cut far down at the back to reveal the top of her bottom as she goes swimming on the south coast. Monday morning her diminutive 5′ 4″ will be on the Piccadilly line again, off to a new job in an advertising agency. 'The last time I worked in an ad agency I was secretary to the creative manager and I sat opposite him. He just sat with his chin in his hands all day. I thought he was miles away in thought. The day I left he suddenly said, that of all the panties I wore the navy blue ones had given him the most inspiration. He must have been looking up there a lot of the time. Wearing a mini-skirt all the time it never really occurs to me how often people must try and look up my skirt.' At 22 she has no plans for settling down. 'The great thing about temping is your freedom. You don't have to get involved in business you don't want. If you're good you can pick and choose.' Her parents run a shop in Cambridge and she sees them some weekends when she goes to watch the university colleges playing cricket. 'Just watching it, you feel so fresh and relaxed. Cricket has a perfection you don't find elsewhere.' Except in Paula of course.

MAYFAIR'S GIRL OF THE MONTH / PAULA MERTON

MAYFAIR'S GIRL OF THE MONTH / PAULA MERTON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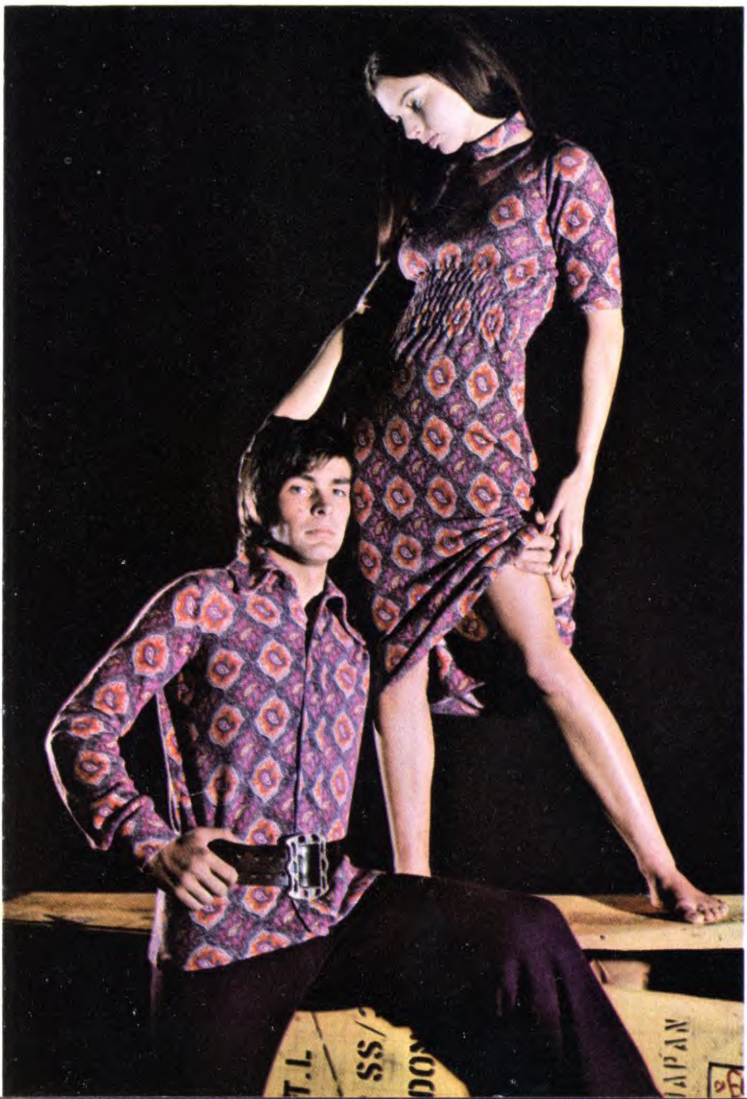
WOOL'S CASUAL PULL

Mayfair menswear by Erica Crome
Photographed by John Adams

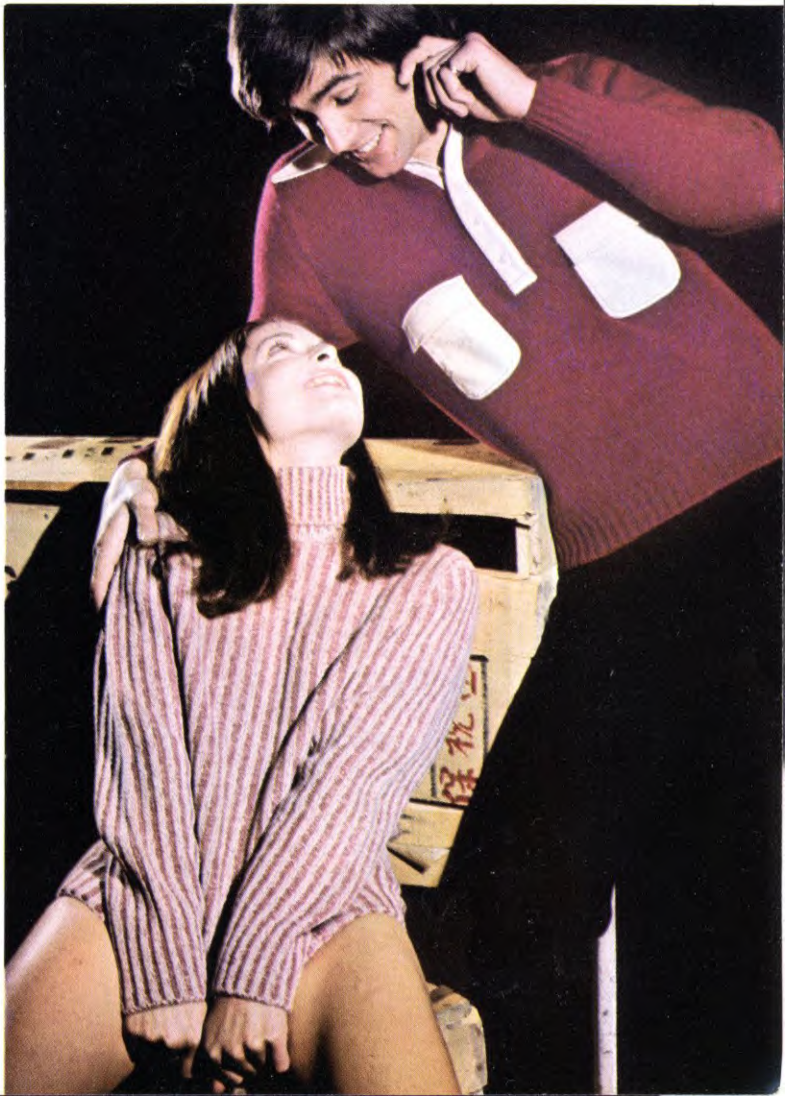
Haven't you heard? They're doing new things with sweaters. Printing on them. Embroidering them. Mixing the knits with woven fabric. So very much more colourful. And so wearable. Grandad's old pullover has been brightened up beyond recognition. Now the sweater's lure is great: so much easier to wear than a suit. Polo-neck's still the popular style. As for texture, it's mainly the close-fitting rib-knit. Who could possibly resist? Woolly temptation

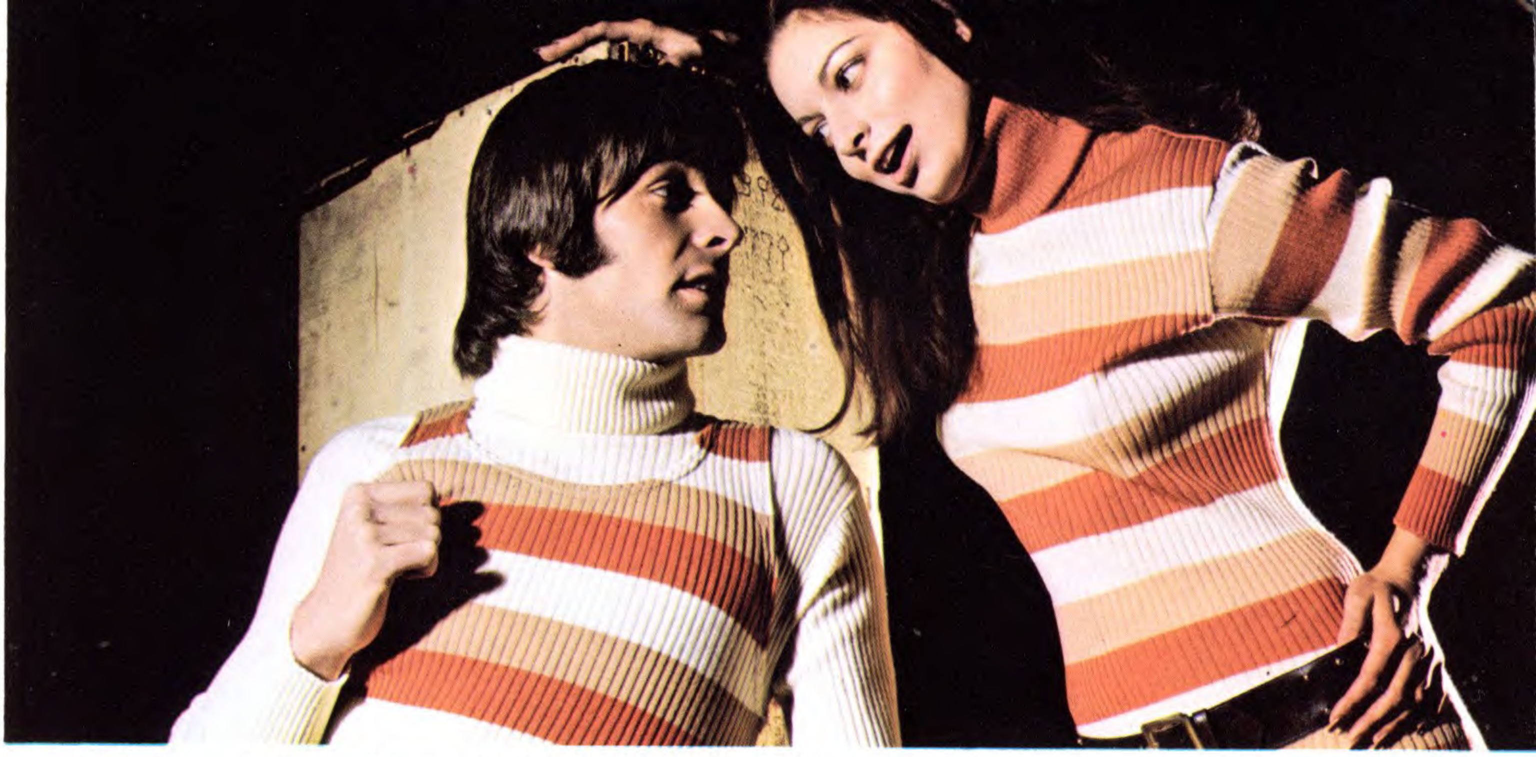
← Striking contrast is the keynote here. His lambswool sweater is in maroon with turtle neck and has sleeves decorated with blue and biscuit stripes. It costs £6·40. By Alan Paine. And what's she wearing? His Shetland sweater. It's in heather mauve with different colours at the u-neck and each of the sleeves. It costs £1·25. And it comes from Sabre

↓ It's completely new: the printed knit. He wears a cashmere shirt printed all over in a curved lozenge design with a laid-on front, a deep collar and button cuffs. £26·10. She's wearing matching short-sleeved printed cashmere dress with a ruched midriff. It's £35. Both by Pringle



↓ How about mixing knitted and woven fabric? He is wearing a Shetland shirt with contrast-stitched patch pockets in calico. So are the collar and buttoned pull-on front. It comes at £6·80. She's wearing his simple polo-neck with striped ribbing. Cost: £7·20. Both by Alan Paine



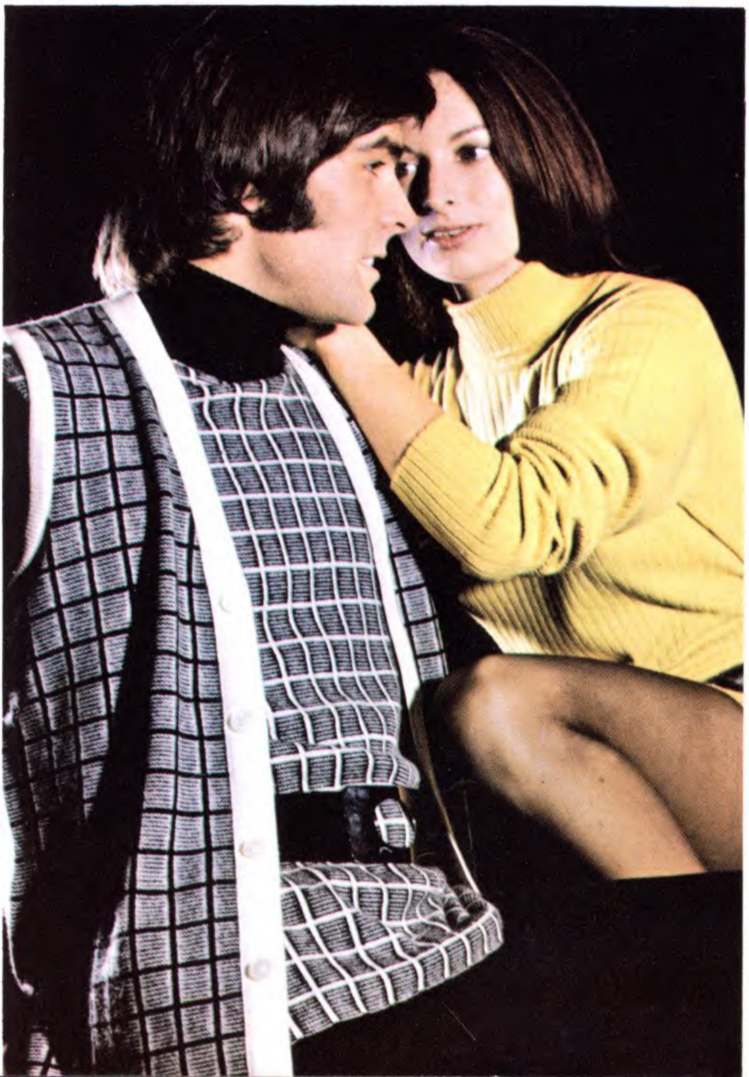


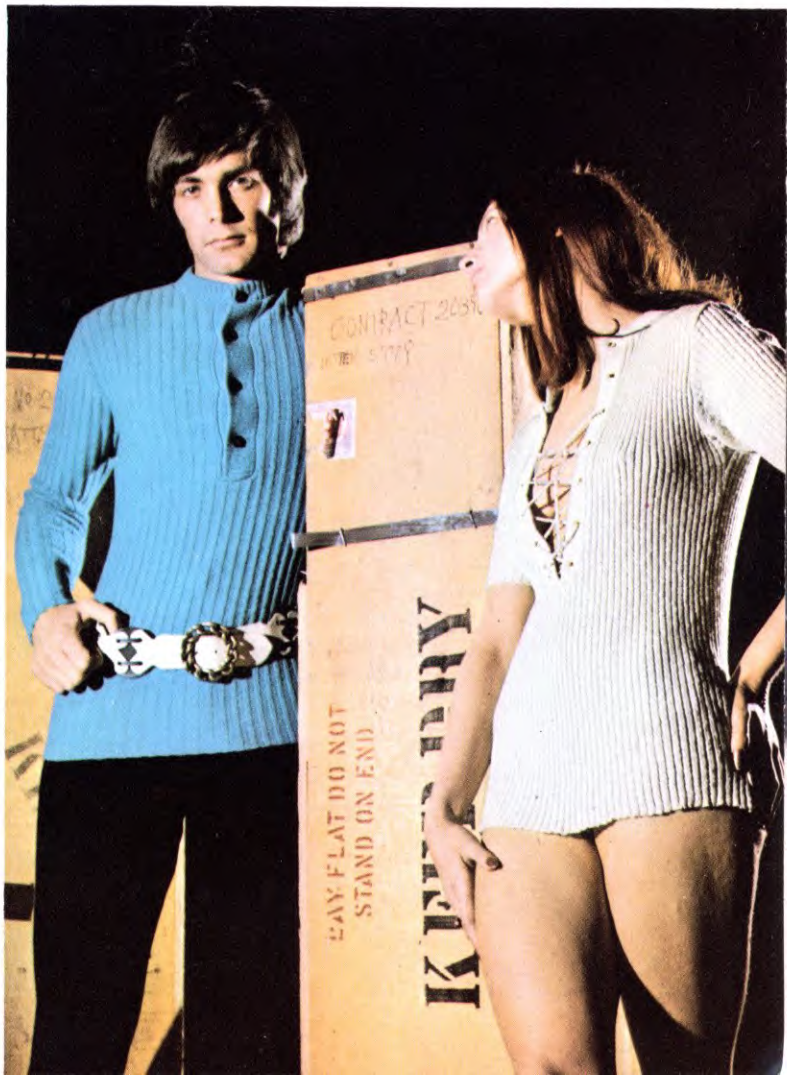
← This is the textured pattern look. He's wearing a sweater with elegant jacquard bands and a plain polo-neck. It costs £5·75 and it comes from Byford. She is wearing a gent's wool/linen mixture polo-neck in the tweedy ribbed style, with fine contrast edging. It's £7. By Alan Paine

↑ The rib-knit style at its most colourful. And some idea of how the new woollens can be mixed. He is wearing a wool tank top over a plain wool polo-neck. The top is £3 and the sweater is £5·25. She's wearing his polo-neck sweater in the same stripes. Cost: £5·25. All from Sabre

Try the soft caress of cashmere. His sweater is chequered on the front and sports plain black sleeves and polo-neck, ↓ with metal-clasped belt. It costs £27. His cardigan is sleeveless and costs £21·10. Black knickerbockers cost £18. She wears his polo-neck, £17·35. All by Ballantyne

Introducing the shirt-cum-sweater: his comes in Shetland, with a pull-on buttoned shirt front to the crew neck. It ↓ costs about £5·50 and comes from Wolsey. She wears his linen/cotton sweater in rib-knit with pull-on lace front and short sleeves. It's by McCaul. Price: £3·50





Stick tight to your clothes, my darlings, you all look sexy when wet

Why, asks Edward Knox, should we men be so aroused by a girl soaked to the skin?

Illustrations by Ronald Cobb

I hope you never have to come to the rescue of a soaking wet girl. If you do, you will probably have to strip the skin-tight clothes from her nipple-hard breasts, slide squelching lace panties down glistening smooth thighs and maul her around under a thick towel, drying out her nooks and crannies while she stands stark naked and helplessly moaning on your bedroom carpet. On top of all this rotten inconvenience, at a time when you could be happily playing with your toy soldiers, you will probably have to top her up with your best brandy and put up with her cold hands roaming all over your body as you cuddle her warm in bed.

'So, what's wrong with that?' you wonder, launching five regiments of deformed plastic soldiers in a three pronged attack on the landlady's cat.

'Is Knox off his chump?' you query. 'Is Knox nutless?'

Not so. It's just that recently in the cause of duty I've been getting very damp indeed. It appears that for a lot of men hot pants take a very poor place to the idea of damp pants. The wet look is apparently nothing more than a pandering to the secret desires of most men to see their girl friends wet and shiny.

A Voice from a High Place, not quite Government level but very nearly, commanded me to investigate this phenomenon. I arranged an interview with a very eminent psychiatrist whose knowledge of sexual fetishism is so detailed and devious that he is reputed to find empty cornflake packets irresistibly sexy. At the last moment I funked this interview, probably from fear that he become sexually empassioned at the sight of the Knox hairy jacket (have you noticed that hair is in these days?). Instead I decided on field trials. This was due to an arousing instance on my own doorstep – yes, that same doorstep I have always been most punctilious about not defiling.

Last Saturday it was, just after that heavy summer shower. She came pattering barefoot across the lawn, blonde hair flying and breasts bouncing out front like insecurely tethered dirigibles. And she disappeared into my front porch. I downed a last wheezing spoonful of sodden rice crispies as the doorbell rang.

'No milk today, thank you,' I said, removing a small plastic frogman from between my teeth as I opened the door (really, there should be more warning on the packet). 'My rice crispies are nicely flooded.'

'Oh dear,' she cried, eyes wide. 'I must have leant on your doorbell. I was only looking for somewhere to shelter from the rain.'

'A better place you could not have found had you studied a guide book,' I cried, removing an obstinate crispy from between my molars with the frogman's left flipper.

Droplets of rain studded her brown and goosepimpled thighs and the damp material of her dress did little to hide her rising nipples. No curve or swoop of her body was immune to the Knox eye.

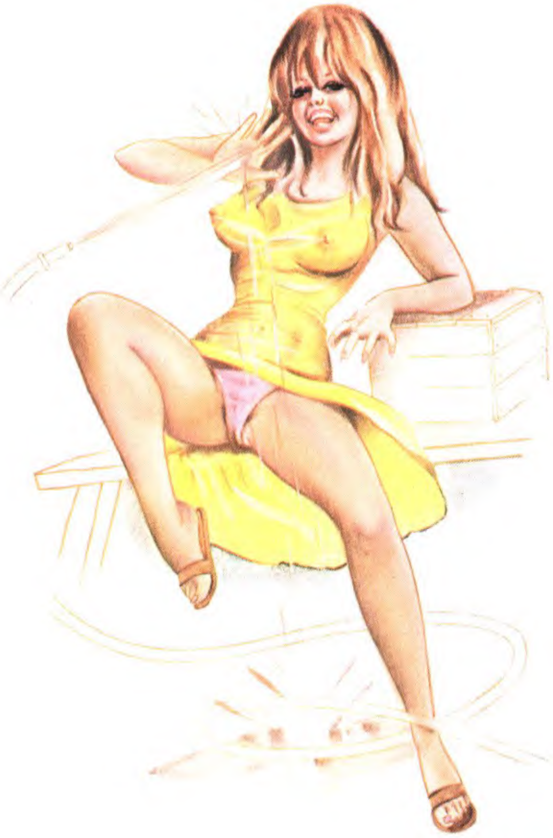
'You're soaking wet,' I observed. 'Not only that, but it suits you.' A sudden thought struck me. 'I say, you haven't been messing about with my bird bath have you? Paddling in it and such?'

'It's raining,' she frowned.

'Why don't you come inside and dry that dress in front of my fire?' I reasoned.

'But, I haven't got anything on underneath,' she said with wide-eyed innocence.

'Nothing?' I cried, severing the frogman's head with a single snap of my teeth. 'I don't believe it.'



'I trust,' she looked up from under lowered lashes, 'that if I come in to dry off, you will behave like a gentleman.'

'So do I,' I said.

'Well, don't you know whether you are or not?'

'Quite frankly, no. I might or I might not. I might well leave you alone. I might well leap on you and rip your flimsy clothing from those superbly proud breasts I see before my very eyes.'

'Oo, look, its stopped raining,' she cried.

'No, it hasn't,' I replied. 'It's pouring down.'

'Where?'

'Erm, that hole in the porch roof.'

'No wonder I'm so wet. Standing in your leaky porch with holes in the roof. Oh look, the sun's come out. I think I'll go home and dry off in front of my fire.'

'No, you won't. I mean, you can't. I mean that's not the sun. It's a mirage. It's actually pouring down. Look at the birdbath. If the side of that birdbath cracks under the pressure we'll be flooded out. Possibly drowned.'

Alas, she looked at me as if I were a babbling babboon and scampered away down the garden path.

Around lunchtime I was plying the hose to my trusty Lancia up the garden path against a slight headwind. I had been goaded into this activity after noticing the particularly lurid advice anonymously scrawled by some ambidextrous sexual fetishist in the muck on the boot. Apart from the fact that it would have been impossible it was doing the immaculate Knox image no good at all.

Whistling a merry tune apropos to the occasion I lashed on the water and thought of back seat engagements as yet to come.

'I say,' a deliciously creamy female voice interrupted my reverie. 'You there with the hosepipe. Would you mind *controlling* it a bit? You're flashing it terribly.'

I shot a quick glance downwards. No flashing there. I glanced at the fence from whence the voice had come.

'I'm soaking wet through,' came the voice again. There was a spluttering noise. Unfortunately while regarding my appearance I had allowed the hose to wander and it was now aimed steadily over the fence. I quickly whipped it away. A beautiful oval face appeared framed in slightly bedraggled hair. But the stupendous pair of flimsily housed boobs that followed, coming to nestle snugly atop the fence, were in no way bedraggled. Bedworthy, yes; but not bedraggled.

She was all of 21 and wearing a practically see-through yellow cotton dress.

'I'm trying to sunbathe over here,' she said, eyeing me up in a not unwelcome fashion, 'and although there isn't a cloud in the sky I'm soaked.'

'My dear lady, please accept my profuse apologies,' I replied, allowing the hosepipe to slip from palsied fingers and fire a solid jet of cold water up my left trouser leg.

I'm afraid I yelped. In fact I may even have run round in rapid circles clutching myself shamelessly.

'My,' cried the young lady, 'what an accomplished yodeller you are.'

The hose-pipe was squirming back and forth across the lawn, spewing gouts of water in all directions. I ran after it. It squirted my face, feet, and already sodden trouser legs. I ran away. It caught me full force in the backside. I caught up with the wretched thing and stood on it. It leapt in the air and drenched my aged aunt who had opened her window to find out what was going on. She managed a faint 'Glug?', shrieked and closed the window. As I plunged through the flower beds in pursuit of either the hose or some decent shelter, the lithe young lady in the yellow garb from next door vaulted the fence. I stood transfixed by the sight as she spread her legs to clear a clump of hyacinths, the hose playing merrily into my left ear. As I stood with mouth agape she rushed over and cornered the spouting hose. It throbbed and gushed between her steady hands.

She eyed me speculatively. 'You're not fit to be in charge of a hose-pipe at all.'

'I'm not in charge of it,' I replied. 'I cannot be responsible for its actions.' I grabbed the thing from her. 'Look, if I point it over there – see how it fires off everywhere else but where I point it.'

'Oh, she squealed, as water cascaded down her thighs. 'It's cold.'

turn to page 59

Edward Knox *continued from page 49*

Her nipples were now standing visibly erect and her dress was nicely plastered to her thighs. 'It does feel funny,' she murmured, smoothing her hands down the dress, making it stick to every nook and cranny. 'What shall I do? I'm so wet.'

'Strip off?' I suggested.

'On the lawn?'

'In my flat?' I tried.

'I'm allergic to bachelor flats,' she replied, vaulting back over the fence.

In the afternoon, the sun still shone and freshly attired in dry clothes I took the Lancia for a spin out to Richmond Park. I was just parking among the trees when I heard a sudden sharp splash and a high pitched female cry for help. And there she was me buckos. The finest piece of free standing womanhood it has ever been my pleasure to come across standing up to her glossy wet thighs in the middle of a lake, clutching a balsa wood model yacht. It took a fine degree of control for me not to fling off my clothes and join her there and then in melting embrace.

'Help?' she queried in a low and sensual tone.

'Possibly,' I said. 'Are you trying to launch it, sink it or rescue it?'

'I was trying to rescue it for a small boy. But when I fell in he ran away. You're not going to run away, are you?'

'Not unless you chase me,' I replied.

'Well give me a hand then.'

Holding onto the outstretched branch of a tree with one hand I carefully leaned towards her with my other arm extended. I clasped her hand firmly in mine and began to pull.

'Oops,' she cried as I hit the water with a mighty splash.

It was only through split second timing born of long years of practice that I managed to grasp her left breast while airborne to prevent myself going completely under. Unfortunately she lost her balance, not to mention half her dress, and I took her with me. And having taken her with me, friends, I was loathe to give her back. Luckily her firm buoyant breasts brought us back to the surface where they bobbed like smoothly rounded marker buoys charting the position of a naval disaster.

She was struggling to her feet. 'Keep your hands off me,' she warned, before I could make any effort to haul myself up.

When we were upright she asked, 'Where's the boat gone?'

'What boat?' I asked, bemused, dragging my feet from thick mud.

'The model yacht.'

'Probably sunk with all hands by an enemy frogman.'

She gave me a funny look. 'It's sticking out of your trousers.'

'It often does, you know,' I replied. 'It likes a breath of fresh air now and then.'

'No, you fool,' she returned, 'the yacht. It seems to be jammed in your pocket.'

So it was. I gave it back. 'Can I drive you anywhere?' I enquired.

'Yes, round the twist, I should think. Goodbye.'

I arrived back at the flat in a state of miserable dampness. As I parked the Lancia round the back and opened the door I was accosted by none other than the landlady's pure and delicious daughter who came to meet me from the shadows of the garage.

'Ah, ha, caught you lurking with intent,' I said, to the accompaniment of my hardening trousers ripping free from the seat.

'It's not a tent,' she laughed. 'It's a plastic mac.'

It was transparent and red. 'It reminds me of a wig-wam I once had the pleasure in,' I said.

'I can see through you, Mr Knox,' she said. 'There's a rip in the back of your trousers.'

'Not only that,' I quipped back, hand on protruding parts. 'I can see you through.'

'It's the bathroom tap. It won't stop running. I'd just got undressed for a bath and I couldn't turn it off, so I put my mac on and came to look for someone with a firm hand.'

'I know where I'd like to put a firm hand,' I cried.

Her eyes widened. 'Where would you put it?' she asked.

'Er, on the tap.'

It wasn't my lucky day, Knox lovers. To get a good grip on the tap I had to climb into the bath. Then it needed two of us so the landlady's daughter climbed into the bath. By some giggling sudsy quirk of fate I had a fine grip on the landlady's daughter at the same moment the landlady came surging in with an idea that it would be a lot of laughs to brain me with a bath brush.

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What's a nice nude like you doing when you're not in The Times?

When Vivien Neves appeared nude in an advert in The Times, some were shocked, some applauded, others, no doubt, were converted. But no-one realised there existed another side to that superb body. The red hot sex-pot star of a Danish film

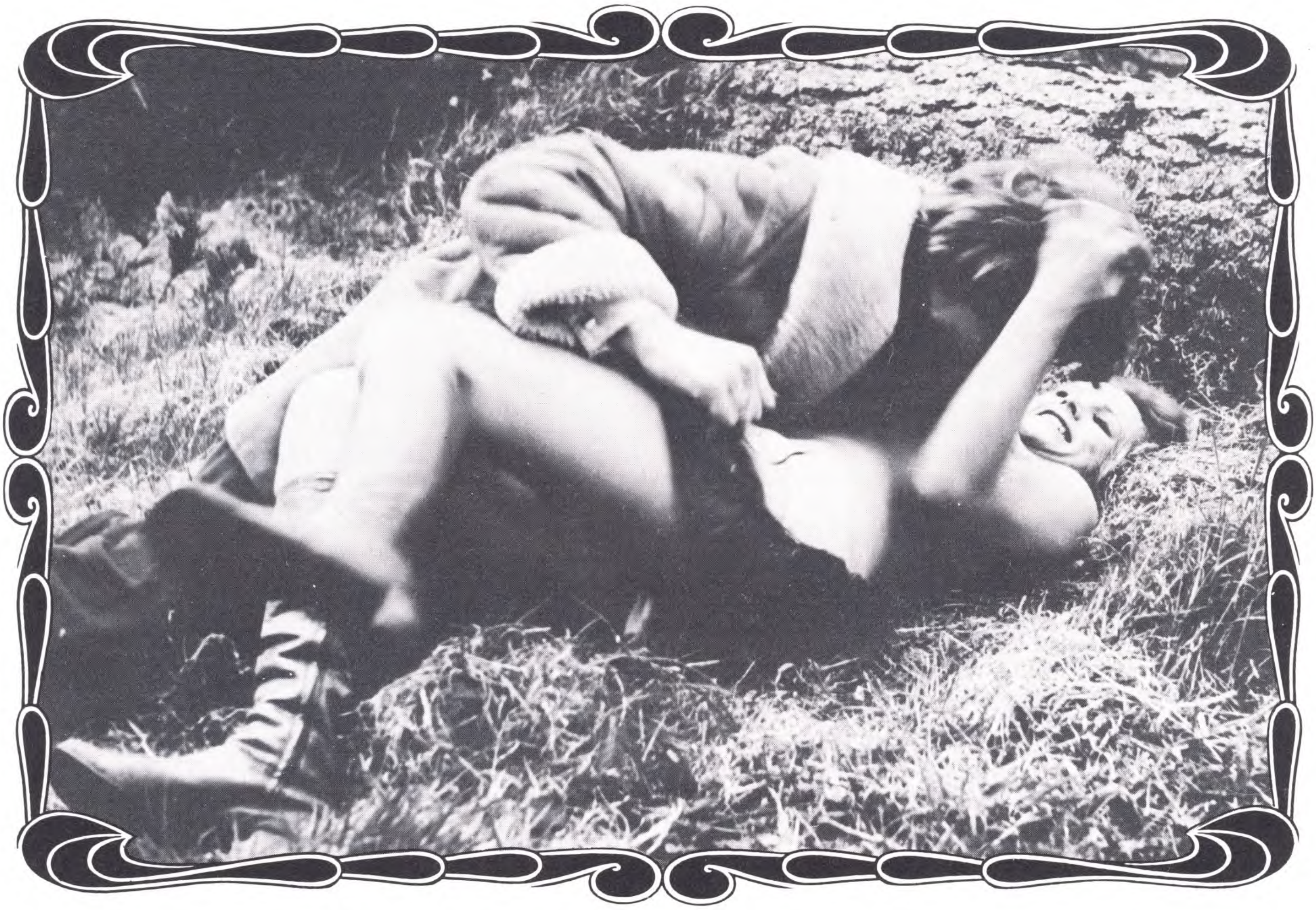
When Vivien Neves appeared as a demure nude in an advertisement in The Times newspaper she caused a sensation. Languidly kneeling on a fluffy fur rug and hiding neither the curve of her bottom nor the jut of rosy nippled breasts, she was depicted in a moment of private ecstasy contemplating the nature of her own long soft hair. The heading ran – 'What's a nice girl like you doing in a firm like this?' Miss Neves was, in fact, promoting the slimming aids side of the giant fertilizer firm of Fisons to their shareholders, the majority of whom read The Times. But the message was received in other quarters and Miss Neves returned from modelling work in Jamaica to find herself something of an overnight celebrity. On that morning many an episcopal eyebrow must have risen at the breakfast table. Though the rise might have been far greater had The Times readers been present at a far randier but little known occasion contributed to by lovely Vivien – the making of a sex film called 'She Died With Her Boots On'. In this jolly epic – Danish produced and shot on location in England – our demure heroine is raped, groped, stripped and seduced. Vivien shows real talent as an actress but who would suppose that the virginal advert nude would turn into the wet mouthed sensualist of this randy film.

Pictures left: This is one of the things nice nude Vivien was doing before she went into The Times; acting a lesbian scene with Pia Anderson playing an over-friendly aunt who makes her predilections plain – so plain in fact that this particular scene was cut in its entirety from the finished film. Pia is the aunt of a young photographer and Vivien is one in a long line of young models she persuades to visit herself and her nephew in their quiet country cottage. It makes for quite a torrid household – all three exchanging affections and bare bodies in not too strict rotation. We're only glad that it was Miss Neves who happened along at the time the director decided to put fact onto celluloid. Below, nice girl Vivien demonstrates a kinkier personality as she dives through the local woods complete with boots and pantie flash. Her topless condition which we find highly engaging, is due to a tussle in the car. But as she plunges half naked into the wood, she plunges even deeper into the sexual morass as readers who turn the page will find.

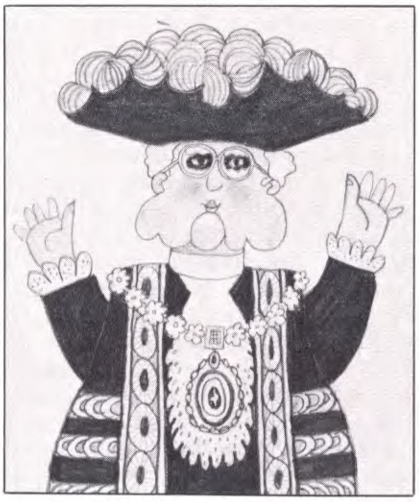
In 'She Died With Her Boots On' 22-years-old Miss Neves further enhances the naked image of British womanhood at home and abroad. She joins the fast growing ranks of well-bred English girls who have bared their all to upstage the old Continental myth of female physical supremacy and performance. Generations of young men who looked to France and Sweden for their sex symbols are being superseded by a new generation enjoying the delights of home-grown girls. With the help of eye-catching statistics which fill sweater and mini-skirt at a firm 35-23-35, she follows girls like Esme Johns (Groupie Girl); Madeline Smith and Gabrielle Drake – all of them sporting a far more natural and basic sexuality than could the top-heavy too blatant fleshiness of past sex-symbols. This new breed of girls can see nothing but good in this unrepentant exposure. They completely accept that nudity is here for the present and revel in it with gusto.

In this film, Vivien is cast as a delectable fashion model lured to the country cottage of a young photographer and his aunt. Both have sexual designs on the girl as well as an illicit sexual relationship together. Although the lesbian scenes between the aunt and Vivien, a woodland rape scene and a naked bedtime threesome have been dropped from the film in deference to the censor, enough meat still remains to make this one highly randy film. 'She Died With Her Boots On', distributed by E. J. Fancey Productions Ltd., is now on general release throughout the country.

Top left: Some sequences in the film were not only too explicit for the censor, they were also too much for nice Miss Neves. This picture in which she does not appear was part of a dream sequence later removed from the film, in which Vivien dreams she is raped by a tramp after a chase. The work was delegated to an unnamed extra after Viv demurred. With scant ceremony the girl is reduced to a similar state to that in which Times readers found Vivien. Top People might like to Take Their Times, but the tramp was somewhat swifter and less couth in expressing his ardour in tangible form. Centre: Once more the woods. After seeing some photographs of a girl being raped and strangled in the same woods, Vivien flees the house. The photographer catches her and with knife in one hand and Vivien's bare flesh in the other, is about to do his thing when the film ends. The abrupt ending is about the only thing in the entire film that is left to the viewers' imagination. Below: The censor saw fit to leave this scene alone when Vivien and the photographer indulge in more straightforward exercise on the living room carpet after a juicy game of strip-poker which to the film-makers lasting credit, she loses. Top, right: Even though willing hands remove all from Miss Neves threshing person, she still manages to retain her boots as the photographer's friend finishes off the tussle he started in the car. Meanwhile the photographer clicks away, explaining to visibly unimpressed Vivien that it's all in the cause of art. Below: Boots finally off, Miss Neves takes to both bedroom and photographer.



Gentlemen, that reminds me...



A round-up of after-dinner stories

The forward young lady accepted with pleasure the date with a handsome young student she'd been fancying for some time. She sat in his little second-hand sports car and let her skirt ride up. He took no notice.

She leant forward to the ashtray and gave him generous glimpses of cleavage. No response. She hitched her skirt up till her panties were showing.

Not a flicker. She turned her knees towards him until he had to touch them each time he changed gear.

Three times his hand brushed her leg as he changed down for a particularly steep hill. But even in bottom gear the car could not make it to the top and the engine stalled just short of the summit.

'It's no use,' he said. 'We'll have to get out and push it up.'

'Thank goodness,' replied the girl, unzipping her skirt, 'I thought you'd never take the hint.'

The vicar was dissatisfied with the growing permissiveness of his parishioners. Obviously they no longer believed in hell fire and damnation.

Clearly, they needed shaking up. Summoning his verger, he told him he had decided to preach a sermon that would mend the devious ways of his wayward flock. The verger would hide in the rafters with some pieces of paper and matches and at the line – 'And fire shall rain down upon them.' – the verger would light the paper and drop it on the congregation. That Sunday the vicar preached his sermon.

'And fire shall rain down upon them,' he thundred. Nothing happened. There was a pause. 'And fire shall rain down upon them,' screamed the vicar. Silence. This was terrible. He repeated the line again. This time the silence was broken by a voice from the roof.

'It's no use vicar, the cat's pee'd on the matches.'

A rancher from the deep south of America was staying with his distant relative, a wealthy English Lord. They had just finished dinner when the butler asked the guest how he would like his coffee.

'Listen, man,' the rancher said, 'I likes ma cawfee like ah likes ma women – warm and sweet.'

'Yes, sir.' replied the unflustered butler, 'Black or white?'

A small town mayor found himself seated opposite an extremely well stacked girl at an important city civic dinner. The girl's low neckline generously exposed her superb breasts. Stuck between them in her cleavage was a red rose.

The Mayor found he was having difficulty in taking his eyes from the scenery. Finally he caught the young lady's glance.

'Miss,' he enquired, 'would you blush if I picked your rose?'

'Sir,' she demurely replied, 'would you flush if I pulled your chain?'

During an army initiative test in jungle country, the sergeant told his men to go out and bring back a pair of ping-pong balls each.

Within ten minutes they were all back, save one, a slightly deaf private.

'Where is private Jones?' the sergeant asked. No-one knew.

Private Jones did not re-appear that day, nor the day after. However, a week later, he staggered into camp, covered in blood and badly wounded. Across his shoulders were two large sacks.

'Where have you been, Jones?' asked the sergeant. 'I sent you off a week ago to find a pair of ping-pong balls and you come back seven days later in a terrible state with two sacks. Explain lad.'

'Ping-pong,' gasped the private. 'Heck, sarge, I thought you said King-Kong . . .'

An industrial efficiency expert was approached at his club one evening by a friend who owned a firm making seaside lettered rock. He was obviously worried.

'Look,' said the friend. 'You're an expert, can you help me?'

'What's the problem?'

The friend's factory was losing money. The expert went round to the factory, cut out overtime, tightened up the piecework system and installed new time clocks.

'You'll soon be rolling in money,' he said.

Two weeks later the owner was back. He was still losing money.

The expert went to the factory again, cut out the tea breaks and speeded up the conveyor belts.

Two weeks later the owner told him he was calling a meeting of his creditors.

'What's gone wrong?' asked the expert.

'Well, can you tell me how I can sell a hundred thousand sticks of rock with *Mean Sod* lettered through them?'

Halfway through the pantomime, the small lad in the balcony wanted a 'wee-wee.' Father was furious but the lad swore he couldn't wait until the interval.

To shut him up, father told him to do it over the edge of the balcony, quietly. Suddenly a toffee-nosed voice shouted up from the stalls:

'I say, you cads, play the game. Wave it about a bit.'

A farm hand and a young girl were watching the progress of a bull as it mated with a cow in the farmer's paddock.

'I wish I were doin' what that there bull be doin,' said the farm hand.

'I'm not stopping you,' said the girl, unblushingly, turning suggestively towards him, hand on hip.

'No, you ain't,' says the farm hand, 'but the farmer might object, it bein' his cow and all.'

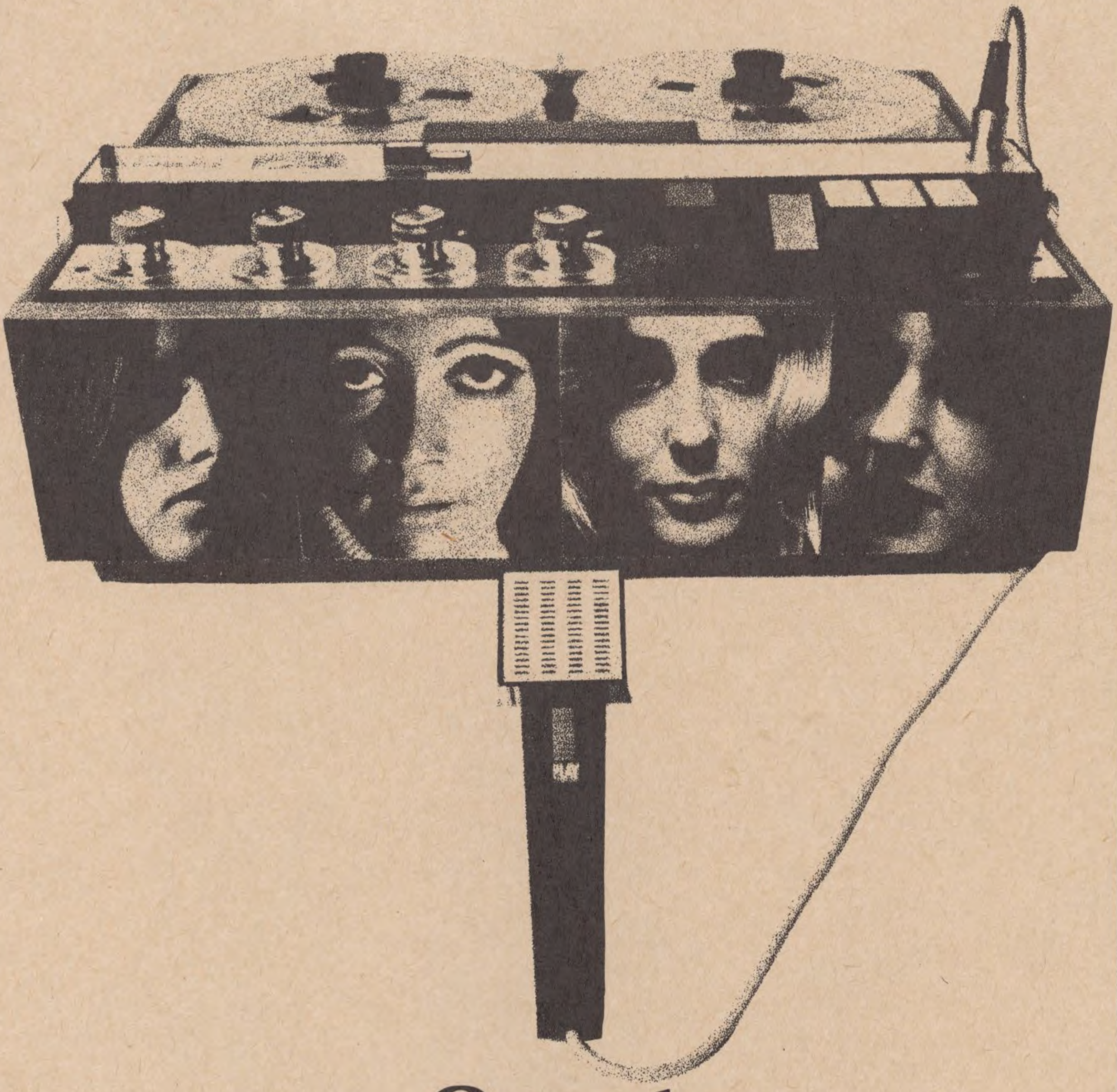
There once was a Bey of Algiers
Who said to his harem: 'My Dears,
'Though you may think it odd o' me,
'I've given up sodomy,
'Tonight we start breeding' – loud cheers.

Share your after-dinner anecdotes. Send them to 'Jokes', Mayfair Magazine, 95A Chancery Lane, London WC2. There is a free subscription for the reader whose letter is selected. In case of duplication of jokes submitted, the Editor's decision on awarding a subscription is final.

CELIA

Glimpses of things seen and understood

An almost half-open door. Passing, you catch a reflected image, as she moves across a mirror. In a blue dress. You pause. Another movement. Was her dress unfastened? A fleeting glimpse of pale soft skin, of her back, bordered by zip, is your answer. Should you linger? Maybe not. Continue on down the stairs. But suppose she left the door open on purpose? Possible. If so, did she guess/hope you would stop? Mostly white: no dress. Lightly, her fingers meet at the clip. Tension slackened: it's off. Should you stay? Perhaps she's absent minded. As well as beautiful. Celia. On the other hand, she has looked into your eyes as you passed wordlessly on the stairs. Celia Madden. *Mrs* Celia Madden. You've noticed one or two letters addressed to her lying in the hallway below. Strange. Who would have thought . . . Sunlight. A cloud passes from her window. Her thumbs ease under the elastic that encircles her hips and downy tummy. She pulls. The arch of her back; her breasts jut free. First one leg, then the other. Quietly off: like a cloud.



Quest

The laboratory of human response
Volume Three

This is the first part of our survey on girls on holiday. We all know the story of English girls on package tours abroad and how the young men of the country make a bee-line for them 'because English girls go all the way.' Do they? Do girls go on holiday ready and willing for casual sexual intercourse? Or perhaps the big romance? Does it matter if it's a hotel in Rimini or a guest house in Rhyl? And anyway, is their outlook any different from their workaday sexual conduct? These intriguing questions have been investigated in our new survey which can be of the utmost help and guidance to the perceptive male reader seeking a holiday relationship

INTRODUCTION

When we carried out this survey on Girls on Holiday we discovered several interesting factors. Firstly, we expected and received a quantity of information with considerable ease. This is not surprising. Most girls go on holiday; the holiday pattern is fairly standard and thus many willing interviewees were able to offer information on this subject. What did surprise us, however, was the quality of the information. It came spilling out. Interviewers noted that there was little reticence at all once the usual anonymity was guaranteed. Girls of apparently retiring nature told us stories of sexual adventure that would not have shamed Casanova. The action, admittedly, was mainly from the men and not always successful from the male viewpoint but it was sexual action nevertheless. Anything from bottom pinching to organised rape was recounted almost with relish. There was, too, through these narratives a sense of 'triumph.' In the main, the girls recounted happy affairs with few complications or difficulties. It soon became apparent that among our interviewees (not a statistically significant number, remember) the idea of the tearful broken-hearted English girl torn from the bosom of her Latin lover was a complete myth. Their chief memories of the native lover, uninhibited and perhaps obscene, were the garlic of his breath and the size of his penis.

It also became apparent in a number of interviews, mostly not related here, that there are a considerable number of virgins about. They are virgins not so much because they wish to be but because they have not been pressed to be anything else. In the main, these girls on holiday remained virgins in the sense of full sexual intercourse, but they all went home with most pleasant sexual memories sometimes through English boys but more often through the attentions of local boys. Many a staid spinster, especially the plump ones, found sun-browned hands sliding beyond their knicker elastic. Most were happy for it to be so. This may be of particular interest outside a holiday context in view of the present statistic showing a preponderance of unmarried males over unmarried females in the United Kingdom.

In this first part of our Girls on Holiday survey the interviews are confined to the Channel Isles. This happened as a result of the candour of these interviews. We were anxious to establish the sexual role of the girl on holiday in the United Kingdom and found in talking to girls who had been to British coastal resorts that further subdivisions occurred. For instance, camping, holiday camping, staying with relations, all produced widely different circumstances and opportunities for sexual adventure and to lump them together seemed a negation of the reasons for conducting Quest at all. However, in Jersey we found that the island was small enough to present a special type of holiday. Most girls holidaying in Jersey stayed at hotels, mostly on the coast, there were an abundance of young people and the island copes very well with the pleasures of music, drinking and dancing. Thus for purposes of comparison between interviews it became an ideal location for a survey into girls who had gone for a sunshine holiday and were in contact mainly with boys from the United Kingdom. Reading this survey, it would appear that Jersey has lived up to its reputation as the Honeymoon Isle.

INTERVIEWS

(In the interviews that follow, all names have been changed, since interviewees are guaranteed absolute anonymity. The places of origin, where stated, are not necessarily the places where the interviewees are now resident.)

One **Receptionist, 20 years old, brunette, town of origin Macclesfield**

This interviewee, a petite and pretty girl, was a receptionist for a light engineering company. She had had a number of jobs and was a cheerful outgoing personality. She lived at home with her parents and younger sister.

Quest: How did you decide on your holiday spot?

Receptionist: My girl friend and I decided it was a good place to go. Friends of ours at the office went last year and said it was super. I've always wanted to go to Jersey, too. Look at the sunshine.

Quest: So what did you expect to find in the description 'super'?

Receptionist: Oh, I don't know. Sun and sand and cheap cigarettes, I suppose.

Quest: But these are things common to the Channel Isles. Why particularly this hotel?

Receptionist: Oh, I see what you mean. Because it was a pretty good place. Lots of young people. Not stuffy, or anything. Lots of dancing.

Quest: Lots of boys?

Receptionist: I suppose so. I mean it wouldn't be much fun without the boys, would it?

Quest: Probably not. Were there any specific boys that interested you?

Receptionist: The good-looking ones!

Quest: Any particularly good looking ones?

Receptionist: Well, there was a party of three; Brian, Colin and Brett. They sat at the next table to us. In the dining room all the tables were in fours and we had two other girls sharing ours, and these three boys were on the next table. They began making up to us at almost the first meal.

Quest: How do you mean 'making up'?

Receptionist: Laughing, and making pointed jokes. That sort of thing.

Quest: Did you encourage them?

Receptionist: Well, we were on holiday weren't we? We just sort of smiled and made jokes between ourselves, the four girls that is.

Quest: You got on well with the other two girls?

Receptionist: Yes, we did really. They were a bit snooty at first but then alright. We only saw them at meals though.

Quest: Why was that?

Receptionist: Four girls together never find the nice boys. Two's far better.

Quest: Being honest with yourselves, were you really looking for boys?

Receptionist: I suppose so, yes, but not in that sort of way. We weren't just waiting to be picked up or anything. It's just that holidays are nicer with boys.

Quest: Did you and your girl friends have regular boyfriends at home?

Receptionist: Not really, I had a sort of semi-steady, more friends than anything, but D . . . , my friend, didn't.

Quest: I'm sorry to pursue this but is it fair to say that it wouldn't have been considered a successful holiday unless you had met some pleasant boys?

Receptionist: Yes, there's no harm in that.

Quest: Were you prepared to sleep with any new boyfriends you met on holiday?

Receptionist: Pardon?

Quest: Were you prepared to have sex with any boys you met?

Receptionist: Not with any boys, no.

Quest: But with boys you liked and perhaps fancied?

Receptionist: Who knows. Perhaps if we got on well or they were absolutely super . . .

Quest: Do you know . . .

Receptionist: Yes, of course. He was one of the boys we've just been talking about.

Quest: Did you say something to him about why you'd come on holiday?

Receptionist: No, I don't think so. What is this, all this cross questioning?

Quest: Did you say, 'It's nice to have someone new in your knickers'?

Receptionist: Did he say that? The rotten . . . He was practically a sexual maniac anyway. He tore my best pair. Anyway, I only let him do it because he was, you know, doing it by himself . . .

Quest: I think we're all getting confused. How about telling me what happened and why . . .

Receptionist: I think you're as bad as the rest. You men are all alike. I never mean to say these things . . .

Quest: Come on. A cracking bird like you will always have men leading you on. You might as well tell me about it.

Receptionist: Flatterer. Well, it was the boys I mentioned. There was a dance that night and these boys danced with us and bought drinks and it was all rather friendly.

Quest: Which boy were you with?

Receptionist: Brian.

Quest: And did he make any advances?

Receptionist: You kidding? Hands up and down my back and on my bottom. But that was only the start. A bit of close dancing and he was away.

Quest: How?

Receptionist: You'll make me giggle. You've heard how they say it in books. 'She could feel his manhood.'

Quest: You mean you could feel his erect penis against your thigh?

Receptionist: Yes, if you want to talk like that, yes.

Quest: How else should one talk about it?

Receptionist: Well, if you're dancing with a boy you fancy you don't exactly say 'Look, your prick's digging into me,' do you?

Quest: I don't know. That's why we're so interested to ask the question. It wasn't meant to offend you . . .

Receptionist: Oh it doesn't offend me, it's just I didn't want you to put words in my mouth.

Quest: Ah, but I haven't. You giggled and said 'manhood'. I said 'penis' and now you have told me the word you really use when talking of a boy: 'prick'. That's what Quest is all about. Finding out how girls talk and think of boys.

Receptionist: Oh I see.

Quest: You see, it's because you are a very honest person that this could make a very valuable interview. You also told me you fancied this boy, Brian.

Receptionist: No, I didn't.

Quest: Yes, I think you said 'when dancing with a boy you fancy'. It's on the tape, we can play it back.

Receptionist: Oh, I see.

Quest: After dancing with Brian like this what happened next?

Receptionist: He asked me to go up to his room.

Quest: How did you react to that?

Receptionist: I told him not likely. He could see I meant it, too.

Quest: I don't mean to be offensive, but why did you tell him 'not likely'?

Receptionist: Because I'm not that sort of a girl. We only had drinks and a couple of dances.

Quest: Did Brian accept this.

Receptionist: In a way. He tried to get me to go down to the beach but I told him I wasn't having any of the moonlight stroll stuff. But I did give him a sort of kiss to show I liked him.

Quest: What sort of kiss did you give him?

Receptionist: You'll want to know the colour of my underwear next. Just a friendly kiss. On the lips. But not a French kiss.

Quest: Thank you. I'd very much like to know the colour of your underwear. It can be very helpful.

Receptionist: Now or then?

Quest: Then.

Receptionist: I don't remember. White or pink I think.

Quest: Not outrageously sexy?

Receptionist: No.

Quest: Might that have been a reason for not letting Brian get any further that night?

Receptionist: Of course not. It was just I was not ready that's all.

Quest: How about the next night?

Receptionist: That was a bit different. We'd all spent the day on the beach at St Brelade's and had a super day. In the evening the boys met us and we went out to one of those pubs on the island. They'd hired a little car. Then we got back to the hotel in time for some dancing. Then we all went up to Brian's room.

Quest: Why was that?

Receptionist: The boys had bought a special French drink in the supermarket and we thought we'd have a bit of a party. not noisy or anything. Anyway, we all sat around and drank and talked and petted a bit. Then the other girls wanted to go and most of the boys went off with them. Anyway after that my friend went off with her boy and just Brian and me were left.

Quest: What happened then?

Receptionist: We just kissed and cuddled on the bed a bit. I was wearing this blouse and Brian had undone some of the buttons.

Quest: Were you wearing a bra?

Receptionist: Yes. With my figure I have to. I'm a bit busty.

Quest: Did he try to undo your bra?

Receptionist: Not then, no. He was kissing me there and pushing his tongue down my cleavage. Then he began to get more randy and he put his hand up my skirt.

Quest: Did you object?

Receptionist: Not really. We'd had a nice day together and if you like the boy it's all right to have a bit of a feel.

Quest: And did he?

Receptionist: You can say that again.

Quest: Please tell me in your own words.

Receptionist: He slid his hand up my leg on the inside. I'm always very sensitive there and I told him so. This seemed to make him do it all the more. Then with his knuckles he kept touching my pants and pushing me there. Then he suddenly slipped his whole hand under my pants and grabbed me.

Quest: You weren't wearing tights?

Receptionist: No. Sometimes I did in the evening but not then.

Quest: Please go on.

Receptionist: We rolled about on the bed and were giggling a bit because he wouldn't let go and then we finished up with me on top of him. He began to kiss me a lot more and then he began to pull my pants down. It was then that Brett came back in. I think he saw my bare bottom.

Quest: Why did Brett come back into the room?

Receptionist: He shared it with Brian. It was their room. He'd taken this girl back to her place and I suppose hadn't got anything. He sounded a bit moody. Anyway he said he couldn't wait all night for us and he was going to bed. I said I ought to go but Brian said no hold on. So Brett began to undress. I kept watching him out of the corner of my eye but I didn't see much except his underpants. He turned away from me to put his pyjama trousers on.

Quest: What were you hoping to see?

Receptionist: I don't know. He was a big hairy chap, I suppose.

Quest: So you stayed with Brian on the bed?

Receptionist: Yes. He'd turned out the light but you could still see quite a bit. I think there was light of some sort just outside the window. Anyway, I was a bit nervous of doing something with Brett there and kept saying I must go. But Brian was very persistent and he kept stroking me and things until I didn't want to go at all.

Quest: You mean he was arousing you?

Receptionist: Yes. It was a bit of a game at first. We were doing things without moving, you know, so as not to disturb Brett.

Quest: What things, for instance?

Receptionist: Getting my pants off, really. He was sliding them down my legs and I was tucking my legs into him to help him. I then smoothed down my dress. Then he undid my bra and was kissing me on the nipples until I was feeling very fruity. It was then that Brian sort of put an arm over me and began to fumble about in the drawer beside the bed. He whispered to me that he was feeling for his 'johnnies'. As he raised himself up I could see across to where Brett was lying. He was facing us and I could see his sheets moving. I thought it very sexy.

Quest: What do you suppose was happening?

Receptionist: He was feeling himself, I think. I thought it very sexy because he was looking at me. Anyway, Brian found what he wanted and plumped back down again. Brian was getting very worked up now and we tried to do everything gently so as not to disturb Brett but I kept thinking of him and having two men in the room and things like that. It was all new to me. Rather like a sexy game.

Quest: And did Brian succeed in making love to you?

Receptionist: Yes and no. It was rather funny really. It was all a bit difficult and he couldn't get far.

Quest: Far in?

Receptionist: Yes. But it didn't matter. I felt myself getting to the boil and I began to wriggle and things. And I get a bit noisy if you want to know and suddenly I had had an orgasm. Just like that. I'd never had it quite like that before.

Quest: And what happened after that?

Receptionist: We both fell asleep on the bed. But I woke up about two thirty and went back to my room. Brian woke up but didn't come back with me.

Quest: You said you were going to explain about Brett. I don't quite see how this remark fits in with this story . . .

Receptionist: No, that was the next time. Forsyte Saga's got nothing on my adventures . . .

Quest: I see, tell me more.

Receptionist: We didn't see anything of the boys next day, except at breakfast when they both seemed a bit quiet. They'd got a chance to go across to the French coast in a boat and were going to be away all day. I expected to see them in the evening in the the bar but they didn't turn up. So about nine o'clock I thought I'd just go and tap on Brian's door. Someone said 'come-in' and when I went in there was Brett just in his pants. I asked where Brian was and he said they'd just got back and he was changing. It was pretty obvious they'd been on the beer all day. I asked him again where

Brian was and Brett kept changing the subject so I asked him outright if he was out with another girl. Brett said he was. He'd gone dancing at her hotel. I was furious and called him a lot of names and then suddenly Brett put his arms round me and said 'Never mind I'll take care of you, I think more of you than he does'. He was very big and hairy and I sort of rested against his chest and then he began to kiss me. I didn't really want anything to happen but I suddenly remembered the previous night and about Brett in the bed by himself and I felt a bit sorry for him and he certainly had a super figure. I sort of felt him round his bottom and then he went mad. He rolled me back on Brian's bed and was tearing at my pants. I said 'steady on' or something and that's when he tore them. But I could see he was very aroused, you know, so I let him take my dress off and he began going mad again. He began biting my nipples and I even screamed out. It was like being with a gorilla. He got all my clothes off and then I got up off the bed and he chased me all nude. I've never seen such a thing. He grabbed me and pinned me down on the bed and we were just going to do it when I said what about the contraceptives. Brett didn't care but I wasn't having that. Then we remembered Brian's in the drawer and he hadn't taken them with him. I was glad about that and for a moment thought I didn't want to do it with Brett but then I thought Brian probably had more than one packet and had some more with him. That made me feel mad at him again and then we did it.

Quest: What was he like?

Receptionist: Very big. But he wasn't very tender or loving and he smelt a bit of the beer.

Quest: Did you reach orgasm?

Receptionist: You kidding? With a boy that size. I think I had two. Afterwards Brett was better and said he was sorry about Brian and that's when I said it was nice having someone new in your knickers. But he shouldn't have told you that. I think he's a bit of a bastard. He probably told everyone. Perhaps that's why I didn't see any more of Brian afterwards, although I know he didn't have any success with this other girl.

Quest: What happened for the rest of the holiday?

Receptionist: I met a nice boy. I didn't let Brett do anything else though he was always hanging around. This boy came from another hotel

Quest: Did you make love to him?

Receptionist: As a matter of fact, no.

Quest: Why was that?

Receptionist: He never got round to really asking me to, if you want to know. He said he wanted to but he never got round to doing it. But he was a nice boy.

Quest: Did you see him after the holiday?

Receptionist: As a matter of fact, no. I was going up to stay with his parents but at the last minute something happened and I didn't go and it sort of died away.

Quest: Did you, on reflection, have a good holiday?

Receptionist: Oh yes, super. But I think Brett was a bit of a bastard.

Quest: Thank you.

Two **Telephonist, 28 years old, blonde, town of origin Swindon**

This interviewee was an intelligent girl who ran the switchboard in a major London company. She had a pretty face but was undeniably plump. She was shy and inhibited but seemed to have a determined mind in some matters. She lived at home with her widowed mother.

Quest: Who did you go with on holiday?

Telephonist: My friend, she's a secretary.

Quest: Do you have a regular boyfriend?

Telephonist: No, I don't actually.

Quest: Do you have some casual boyfriends?

Telephonist: No really, no. I don't have much time, really.

Quest: When you came on holiday were you looking for a boyfriend?

Telephonist: No, not really. I mean it would be lovely to find the great romance, but we didn't go hoping to pick up boys or anything.

Quest: But a boy found you?

Telephonist: Well a man really. Sandy was 32. He was quite small but very nice looking. Very well dressed too. He wasn't married and he'd come on holiday by himself. He asked me to dance the very first evening. I was very surprised.

Quest: Why were you surprised?

Telephonist: Well you can see for yourself, I'm fat.

Quest: Well let's say plump.

Telephonist: That's exactly what Sandy said. He said he much preferred plump girls. 'I happen to prefer them' he said. They were exactly his words.

Quest: Did he say why he preferred them?

Telephonist: Yes. He said they were more cuddlesome. He asked if I was cuddlesome. He was quite bold. All this was the first evening.

Quest: Did he make any sexual advances that first evening?

Telephonist: Not really. I'm glad he didn't. My friend hadn't found a partner and I thought it would make her rather unhappy if I had a man making advances to me. She was very good though. She told me to go ahead and good luck. When the dance ended Sandy escorted me back to my room and we had a goodnight kiss outside the bedroom door.

Quest: Was it a passionate kiss?

Telephonist: Yes, they were rather. It was my doing. I had had a very happy evening and I wanted to say thank you. I think then I started him off. He was using his tongue and all my lipstick had come off by the time we finished. He put his hand on my breast but I told him someone might come along. But it was a very pleasant evening. I was quite reluctant to go.

Quest: And did he on a later occasion make further sexual advances?

Telephonist: Yes, it was two days later. We were sitting in the television lounge in one of those two persons settees. With my size it was a bit of a squeeze. There was a special programme Sandy had wanted to see. A sports thing it was. We were sitting there in the dark and he had his hand round my waist. Then suddenly I felt his hand moving downwards. He found the hem of my skirt and began sort of gathering it up in his fingers. I put my hand on him but it didn't stop him. Then I felt his hand go under my dress and onto my thigh. I shouldn't be telling you all this, should I? I think it's the drink talking . . .

Quest: I think it's the real you talking. Please go on.

Telephonist: Well his hand was on my thigh, and I remember thinking that is rather nice, I hope no-one sees but no-one could because our settee was in the corner at the back and no-one could see from that side.

Quest: Were you wearing tights?

Telephonist: Oh no. I don't often wear tights they make me very hot. I was just wearing this silk summer frock.

Quest: And underwear?

Telephonist: Oh yes, of course, yes. Bra and pants.

Quest: What sort of pants?

Telephonist: Nylon briefs actually. Pink ones.

Quest: Thank you. Please go on.

Telephonist: Well, Sandy couldn't move his hand much because I was sitting on a lot of the dress, of course, and then I began to feel him tugging the dress from under me. And then, I blush to tell you, I raised myself slightly off the settee to help him. I felt quite a conspirator, I can tell you.

Quest: Then what happened?

Telephonist: His hand began to stroke my thigh in little circles. Then he began to move to the front and I felt his finger inside my elastic. I sat there hardly daring to breathe.

Quest: Why?

Telephonist: Shock, I suppose. I hadn't had anyone try to do that since my youth club days. I had my knees together but that didn't seem to stop him. Then all of a sudden he was touching me there. My hair.

Quest: Did you say anything?

Telephonist: No nothing. My mind was in a turmoil. But then he whispered in my ear to slide down a little bit, and I did just like that. I was surprised at myself. This made it easier for him and suddenly his hand was caressing me there completely.

Quest: Did Sandy bring you to orgasm?

Telephonist: Pardon? Oh, no I don't think so. But my mind was in absolute turmoil. I felt all different and I didn't seem to be in the room at all.

Quest: What happened next?

Telephonist: After the programme was over we left the television room. I was very quiet and Sandy asked me if I'd like a drink. We had a drink at the bar. I had two brandies. Then I asked Sandy if he would excuse me as I wanted to go to my room. My mind was in such turmoil. Sandy was very concerned, but I told him it wasn't him. I went back to my room and laid there and thought and thought before I fell asleep. In the morning I felt completely different and that is why I said I would talk to you about it, although I do hope I shan't regret it.

Quest: I'm certain you won't. Your story will be of great help to other girls like you.

Telephonist: That's the point, isn't it. You see, in the morning I decided that I had enjoyed it very much. I could see things clearly again. And I just wanted Sandy to do it all to me again.

Quest: And did he?

Telephonist: We met in the morning and we went to this nice bar we had found. It was a lovely sunny day and afterwards we strolled back. I told him I was seeing my friend on the beach in the afternoon, and Sandy said what a pity he had hoped we might have a little cuddle. That was the word he used. And I said, oh what a pity perhaps we ought to have one now. I was quite surprised at myself; brazen hussy, I thought. Anyway, Sandy said what a good idea, and led me back to his room. It was a single room as he'd come alone. We lay on the bed and had a good kiss and cuddle and then he made me take my dress off because it would get creased. Then he took my bra off and was kissing my breasts and my nipples stood up and his hand went down inside my briefs. I thought to myself I was turning into a nymphomaniac, here I was having it in the morning.

Quest: Did you have intercourse?

Telephonist: Oh no. It was soon lunchtime anyway and I had to get dressed.

Quest: You sound quite reluctant.

Telephonist: Well, he was very nice.

Quest: And what happened after that?

Telephonist: Well we petted a lot after that, and on one occasion we were both completely nude and in his bed, but I was very apprehensive that we would get carried away. But it was almost on the last day that it happened.

Quest: Tell me about it.

Telephonist: There was a dance in the evening and I had worn my new midi-skirt. After the dance was over we went back to Sandy's room and were petting on the bed when Sandy felt my stockings.

Quest: Stockings?

Telephonist: Yes, I don't like tights because they make me so hot. So with a midi-skirt I sometimes wear stockings. Most girls think them old fashioned but I like them and I wear them with a very pretty suspender belt. Anyway, Sandy felt these and put his hand up my skirt and began saying the most outrageously sexual things. He had taken my blouse off and my bra and he had been kissing me on my nipples and saying funny

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little things about piggies going to market. He was very amusing like that. Anyway, when he began saying these really sexy things it was like a different man talking. He undid my skirt, it buttons right through, and then he made me lie face down on the bed. Then he made me lift myself up until I was on all fours with my knees and elbows. Then he went round behind me and very slowly slid my briefs down. I felt rather embarrassed because my bottom is so big but he said it was lovely. He began to stroke me and kiss me and then I felt him against me. He began to say very sexy things and then he said that you couldn't have a baby if you did it from behind. The angle wasn't right. He got me to open my legs a little and I felt him slide in between my legs. I thought, this is it but I didn't care as long as I wasn't going to be pregnant. It only went in a little bit . . .

Quest: In your vagina?

Telephonist: Yes. Only a little way. I was trembling all over. Then we sort of collapsed into each other's arms and I cried a little to think I was no longer a virgin but I was glad I wasn't.

Quest: Did you have an orgasm?

Telephonist: No I don't think so. Sandy did but not in me, if you understand, he was very careful.

Quest: Did you make love again.

Telephonist: No not then. Because we were going home next day but we will when we meet again. I find myself missing him terribly and thinking the most sexy thoughts about him. Fancy him going for me.

Quest: Have you arranged to meet again?

Telephonist: Oh, yes. But he's away in the north on a job for three months. I'll see him after that.

Quest: Thank you, and I wish you happiness.

Three **Personal assistant in an advertising agency, 23 years old, brunette, town of origin Sheffield**

This interviewee was a strikingly beautiful girl of considerable intelligence but rather highly strung. She had had several affairs including a recent unhappy liaison with her boss. She shared a flat with one other girl.

Assistant: I went on holiday alone.

Quest: You're a very attractive girl to go on holiday alone.

Assistant: I'd had this ghastly messy affair at my work with my boss, the bloody, adorable bastard Bernard. I gave that guy everything I had and he tramples all over me . . .

Quest: So you wanted to get away from the past.

Assistant: I wanted to forget he ever existed. To forget we'd ever made the most fantastic love together, to forget that I had . . . oh but never mind. I'll bore the pants off you next like I do all men.

Quest: Do you want to tell me about this affair first?

Assistant: Not particularly. We met and screwed and screwed, that's what. That's his word. Making love together, that's his wife's word. That 's all there was to it. And his wife won.

Quest: What's your word for it?

Assistant: Sleeping together, I suppose. Yes, that was the trouble. I wanted us to sleep together, you know, all night. And he had to get up and go home like sordid affairs everywhere.

Quest: So you went on holiday?

Assistant: By myself. Not even with one of those vibrators all the agency people are chuckling about. Instant orgasm. Don't let me put you off. I'm joking.

Quest: I see. How about your holiday. Where did you stay?

Assistant: At this farmhouse some way away from the coast. Lovely old apple-cheeked farmer's wife. Just like it was in my childhood. The farmer wasn't though. Non-shaven twisted sort. Should have been in a TV play as the man in the dirty raincoat. He wanted me badly I could read it in his eyes. But I'd have soon gone to bed with the Hunchback of Notre Dame.

Quest: Did he make any advances?

Assistant: No, none at all, thank goodness. He'd have got my foot in his crutch if he had.

Quest: What did you plan to do on holiday?

Assistant: Laze about by myself. I had this little attic bedroom so I remember thinking if I found a marvellous man I could hardly lead him back to sin in this pure little bedroom. And they wouldn't lock up before I was back at night so I was going to be a wise virgin for ten days. Only it didn't turn out like that.

Quest: Who was he?

Assistant: A young fisherman and boat owner. There was this little rocky bay with a rather pebbly beach that no-one ever went to. I used to go there every day. I could sunbathe in the early hours before the sun moved round.

Quest: In the nude?

Assistant: No. Of course not. In a pale blue bikini with a wide belt.

Quest: Sorry. Go on.

Assistant: I'd often seen this boy there. He was very slim with incredibly slim hips. I remember thinking that we'd go quite well together because of my slimness and I'd been wearing the same rather faded jeans that he had. After a few days we got to the good morning stage but he never left his work. Then towards the end of the holiday I was walking back for lunch when at the end of the beach he came up, too, wiping his hands. He just began to talk as if we'd been talking all week. I had to slow him down a bit but it turned out he was a refugee from the rat race. English but come across to the Channel Islands and liked working there on boats and fishing. Then he said 'If you like this beach in sunshine you should see it in moonlight. It's practically full moon at nine tonight you ought to see it.' I thought he was going to offer to show it to me or something but he didn't say any more on the subject. He went off to the shops for something and I went back to the farmhouse. I pottered around in the afternoon and went shopping but after supper I thought about the moon. I couldn't see it getting dark as early as nine although it was September. Anyway I thought I would stroll down just to have a look.

Quest: What were you wearing?

Assistant: Just old things. Sweater and jeans and a leather jacket.

Quest: So you went down to the beach?

Assistant: Yes, but not at the time he had said. By nine it was darker than I thought but no sign of a moon, so I waited a bit before strolling down. When I got there there was just a moon coming up but it was more than that. The atmosphere of the place was pure gothic. It was blues and blacks and shadows and the sea very gentle and that rushing sound of the pebbles. It was solace to me. I didn't hear him come up behind me but he suddenly called hallo and he was there. He put his hands on my waist and said 'Hello, you look just right here. The goddess of the rocks.' I sighed and turned round to look at the sea. I stretched out my arms and he was still holding my waist, and he just slid his hand up over my breasts. I arched my back and felt my nipples stiffen. It was amazing. I suppose it was because no man had touched me for about a month. I suddenly felt very sexy. I turned round to him and we kissed very wetly. I remember smelling his aftershave and thinking he had a shave specially this evening. He's planned it. But I didn't care. We just clung together and then he pushed me standing against a rock and cradled my head and kissed me very slowly and thoroughly. I felt just like a child again. Then he pushed his hands under my sweater. I felt him shiver when he touched me. I just had my bra on. He unclipped that and there he was moulding and cupping my breasts and murmuring things into my ear. I could have stayed like that for a year, I think.

Quest: Standing up?

Assistant: Yes. But then I felt his hand go down. A very slim hand it was, and he unzipped my jeans. He didn't try to pull them down or anything he just unzipped them and pushed his hands in. I had on these very flimsy pants and he was squeezing me through them. I could feel myself getting damp. Then without a word he sank to his knees on the pebbles and held me round the thighs. I was stroking his hair and then he slowly drew my jeans down my legs and did the same with my pants. He pulled me to him and kissed me there with his tongue. I was practically babbling away. He was fantastically gentle. Then he got up and began pulling my jeans up. Of all things he began apologising and then kissing me on the mouth again. I felt so emotional I was half crying and half angry. I could feel the tears on my cheek. 'Peter, darling,' I said 'You can't leave me in this state, you just can't.' I was practically asking for it. Peter took one look at me and didn't say a word. He half dragged me across to a sheltered bit of rock and laid me down. He held the legs of my jeans and gently tugged them off and pulled my pants off almost contemptuously. Then he stood there in front of me and unzipped himself and took his trousers off. He was wearing swimming trunks but he had trouble getting them off. When he did he looked magnificent in the moonlight. He just dropped on top of me and slid his hand back under my sweater. I could feel his other hand working at me and before I knew it he was in me. I arched my back and was scratching down his back and there was this pain in my bottom from the stones. When he finally rolled off me I was black and blue. I just lay there in the stones and sobbed.

Quest: Were you crying because you were hurt?

Assistant: No it was the emotional release. I suppose I'd wanted to do that all week and I didn't think it could ever be that fierce again after Bernard. But it was.

Quest: And afterwards?

Assistant: We got dressed and went back up the path to the top. We didn't say anything just had our arms round each other. He walked me back to the farm and then kissed me goodnight. I clung to him a bit and before I knew where we were we were doing it again. In a potato field this time. He undressed me completely this time. I was covered in dust all over my legs and bottom and back. He had a really hard body that aroused me in some special way. At the end he just said 'I'll think I'll keep these for luck' and stuffed my pants in his pocket. I ached like anything when I got in and I was scared of making the sheets all dusty but I could hardly have a bath. So I washed down with my face flannel. Why am I telling you all this? I'm just one easy lay after another.

Quest: If I said to you now 'take your pants off, I want to have sex with you,' would you?

Assistant: No, I wouldn't.

Quest: Then you're not that easy a lay. Forget it. It's just that we have deliberately been talking sex for a couple of hours I suppose.

Assistant: I suppose you're right. But for God's sake don't try and get me to have sex with you. Sex with your Father Confessor, that's the end.

Quest: I promise.

SUMMARY

In the first interview we had an example of what is probably a quite widespread occurrence of casual sex. The interviewee had said that it was 'nice to have someone new in your knickers.' We who deal in words find a significant modern ring in the phrase. It is less dogmatic, less trenchant than 'do your own thing'. What is perhaps more important is that it was said almost as a word of reassurance to someone with whom she was prepared to have sex more in sorrow than in hunger. This interviewee went on holiday knowing that boys had a large part to play in the success or otherwise of the holiday. She had sex with two and was prepared to have sex with a third. At first sight she may sound the traditional 'easy lay' but in our opinion this would be an unfair judgment. From her own statements it seems most likely she would have preferred to have stayed with the first boy throughout the holiday and, who knows, beyond. Just how much is sex a seeking? Who is qualified to say?

The second interview was to us a very interesting case. In printing it we run the risk of readers thinking 'how naive can you get? This girl has the vapours over a preliminary sexual advance enjoyed and encouraged by most school-girls.' We can only say that the more we investigate with Quest the more we find an enormous range of sexual sophistication and sexual innocence. A rather similar thing is happening we feel in other sexual surveys where the old question of 'how often is normal?' comes up again and again. There is no norm. We feel that readers should assess this interview with sympathy. Loneliness and shyness are two of the most common human conditions in men as well as women. The man who is shy may well learn more from this interview than many others. The girl was pretty but plump. She appeared to have a good figure other than that and as the interview progresses it is obvious that she is very normal sexually. It is her mental reaction that takes time to bridge the acceptance gap. Note how once she has mentally accepted a sexual stage as enjoyable and allowable she is ready to progress to the next. Who reading the first part of the interview would have guessed that by the end of the holiday she would have been enjoying sex in an unorthodox position.

One wonders if anything other than a holiday would have provided this girl with an opportunity of meeting an interested man and enjoying an escalation of sex.

The third interviewee was undoubtedly highly strung and seemed to be suffering from a crisis of confidence in her ability to hold men sexually. The interest of this interview centres on the fact that the girl went on holiday in order not to be sexually involved and yet she ends up enjoying violent love with a man with whom she has exchanged only a few words. And despite her declared intentions, this girl was left with a need to prove herself sexually and a personable man had only to show the slightest interest for her to be a more than acquiescent partner. At the risk of being epigrammatic, we would observe that sexual acquiesence knows no surer signal than a stiff nipple. Words are superfluous. The point to be drawn from this perhaps is that a man on holiday seeking a new relationship probably feels that he has to make the running. In fact, it may well be that a girl will actively seek his solace. That is a thought that brings both comfort and confidence.

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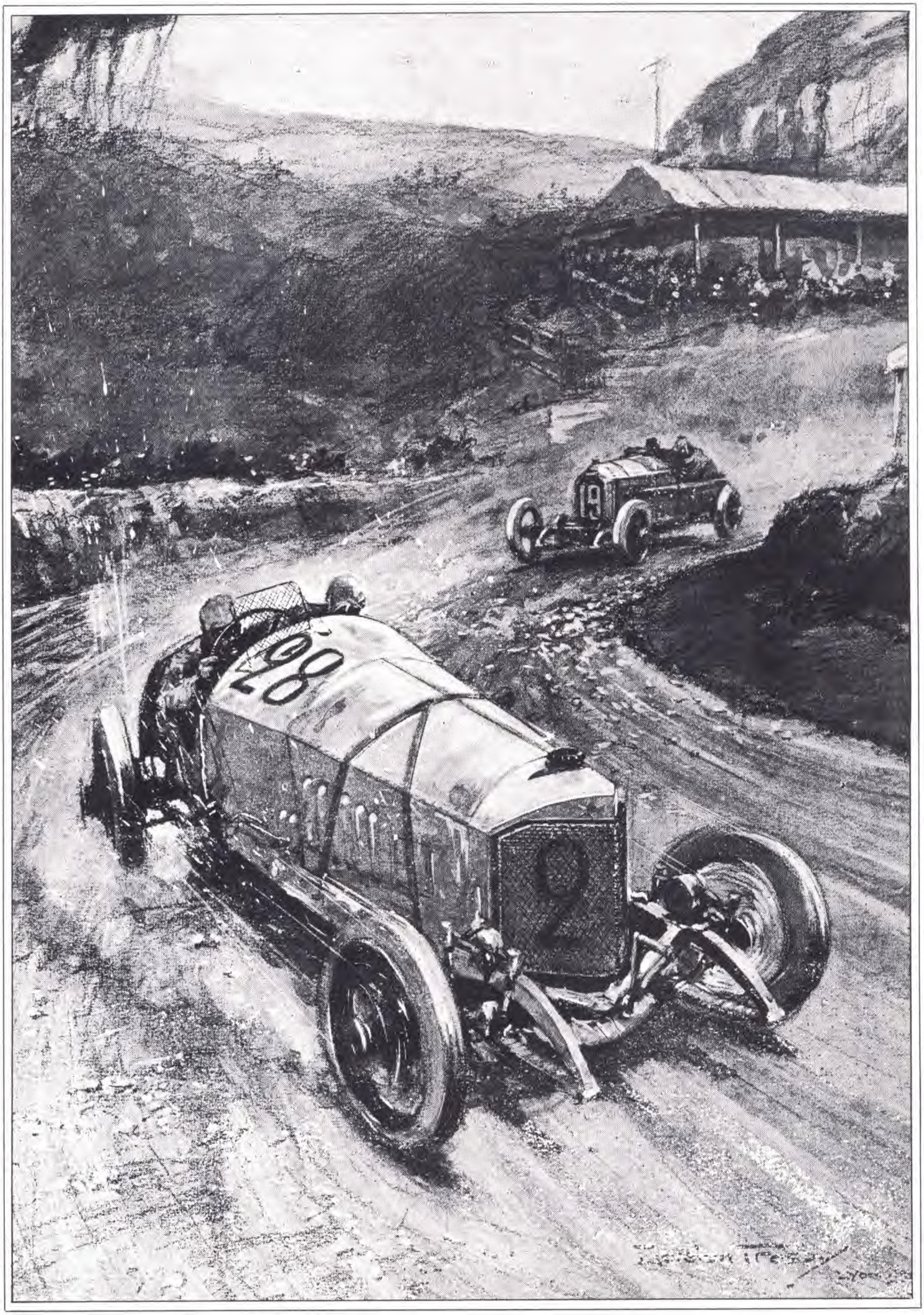
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19

THOSE SCARY DAYS ON HAIRY TRACKS

Motor-racing has come a long way since the old hell-for-leather days when tracks were unmade roads of mud and stones. But, asks WB, has it lost some of its magic?

Motor racing – the most exacting, exciting, fascinating and dangerous sport in the world.

It has an enormous spectator following in America and a decidedly firm hold on the British sporting public. It is complex, expensive, and not easy to organise safely and successfully. It has changed probably more than any other sport. I would say not for the better. But then, I am a biased old square.

I never tire of telling how heroic and manly motor racing was in the good old days. The days when they drove in primitive but horrifyingly powerful and quick, lofty, almost brakeless chain-driven monsters, from Paris to the far capitals of Europe. Until accidents to onlookers and competitors in the dust-laden circumstances of Paris-Madrid caused the authorities to call an immediate halt at Bordeaux, in the fateful year, 1903.

Nor do I tire of telling how in later eras the bare-headed, lounge-suited amateurs flirted with speed, high speed, round Brooklands in an odd assortment of racing cars, ignoring the penalties which would follow the blow-out of a high pressure beaded-edge tyre, the collapse of a wire wheel or a skid developing at over 100 mph on the steep bankings with nothing at their rim to prevent one going over the top. As several drivers did, most of them to drive again on the morrow – but not Frenchman Chassagne *sans* both his shoes, dragged off by the Talbot-Darracq as it leapt into space and the pine-trees.

Of the tough assignment of driving a nineteen-twenties Grand Prix car in the classic contests of those times, races of the utmost importance to the manufacturer who had entered you, lasting 500 miles or so over stone-strewn, tortuous roads with precious little room for overtaking; yet overtake you must if success was to be achieved, on bone-hard springs, on a metal unpadded seat, with only crude four-wheel-brakes to check your 120 mph passage before the corners.

Yes, the races of old are well worth recalling. It is not that I think the present-day breed of Grand Prix drivers any less brave. To drive surrounded by highly inflammable fuel boxed into a tight cockpit from which it is impossible to extract yourself quickly, in a racing car about as protective as a light aeroplane if it has a crash – that's brave by any standards. And the skill has increased considerably, replacing the endurance and stamina which the pre-war driver had to possess. The vast improvement in tyre technique and the far, far better understanding of suspension has combined to glue the modern frail racing *bolide* to the road. It can be coaxed round corners very fast indeed, so that, if it does go out of control, the accident will be of much magnitude, and very likely catastrophic. The modern breed of racing driver is brave, all right.

What I gripe about is the fact that they are choosy about the circuits they race over. Spa, that very fast Belgian course where Seaman, amongst others, died, because rain showers can blow up suddenly and wet one side of the circuit while the rest is dry, and the multi-cornered German Nurburgring, where to learn the hazards, what lies over the next blind brow, whether the rapidly looming corner is left or right handed, exhausts the mental capacity of all but the top flight. These circuits are black-listed by the Grand Prix Drivers' Association, the racing driver's trade union.

It wasn't like that in the past. The rewards to be derived from motor racing were far less, yet drivers of all calibres, amateur and professional, highly skilled or novice, drove wherever races were mooted. The more difficult the circuit, the greater the likelihood of disaster if mistakes were made, the keener they were to get onto the starting grids. Today we still have the magnificent Monaco Grand Prix, a true round-the-streets race, in which the drivers are changing gear almost continuously as they take corner after corner, some very slow, none very fast, but all hazardous because they are on real roads, bordered by kerbs, walls, houses, with a tunnel to plunge into from the brightness of day and an unfenced harbour to race over, where the cars are quite capable of taking a header into the Med. And once one did. Alberto Ascari, who was the luckless fellow, swam ashore from his sunken car, none the worse for a sudden change of environment.

This one, so far, the present-day drivers who constitute the highly-subsidised and lavishly-paid performers in the 'circus' of current Grand Prix or Formula One racing, have not boycotted. But they view any course not protected by Armco barriers with deep suspicion. Not so in the pre-war days. Then public roads were closed for the great races and the only insulation from very solid and substantial scenery were a few straw bales put down with the protection of the onlookers, not the drivers, in mind. They raced round-the-houses, in Nice, Pau, Monaco, Ireland and the Isle of Man. They sped over slippery tram-lines through town squares, with the famous Newtownards butcher's-shop a Tourist Trophy danger-spot, and up mountains with unguarded drops over the edge in the Targa Florio. They knew nothing of non-skid surfaces, wore only linen helmets, and treated the entire thing as a good joke and a better adventure.

There were fewer races and fewer true racing drivers in those days. A racing car was different, infinitely more exciting, than a touring car, but it was still a vehicle you could take out on the road, even if noisy, uncomfortable and temperamental. The modern F1 piece of rear-engined science fiction is not. No longer do you see 600 hp aeroplane-powered monsters with chain-drive chassis from yet an earlier age thundering round the top of the Brooklands bankings in pursuit of a slender road-racer of much the same age.

The fun, the atmosphere, the glamour has diminished, in the opinion of this writer – who only hopes that the young race-goers of 1971 get the same thrill as they pick up a bird and set off towards Silverstone or Brands Hatch as he did with a flapper beside him in the Austin Seven, heading for Brooklands or Donington. It *may* seem as exciting, the cars certainly go faster round the circuit. But the police you encounter on the way aren't so tolerant of funny modes of transport or a burst of speed in a built-up area as they were in my day. And the racers on the track all look much the same, and have only recently ceased to resemble garden rollers rigged up as aeroplanes.

For one thing, the 'bookies', who used to give a horse-racing atmosphere to the Weybridge and Derby circuits, have gone. For another, the nobility and gentry have largely forsaken this raucous, unmerciful sport. Never again shall we see racing drivers perched high on stripped chassis, clad in jockey's silks as their sole means of identification.

For that matter, we shall never again see those piston-engined freaks which ran perhaps once in their mechanical lives in pursuit of the World Land Speed Record – the Bluebirds, the Golden Arrow, the Silver Bullet. And that Sunbeam which possessed two engines giving a total of 44-litres, an enormous all-enveloping red

Left: A far cry from modern racing cars, was Lautenschlager's giant 4½ litre Mercedes, pictured winning the 1914 French Grand Prix hull, chain drive, Segrave somewhere in the middle of it. It was crude beyond imagination, yet it was the first motor car to officially exceed a speed of 200 mph. It did this in 1927, on an unknown stretch of beach far from its Wolverhampton birthplace, at Daytona in Florida, on narrow treadless tyres, to bring us a little of the respect and prestige we could make such good use of today. This odd creation rests now in the Montagu Motor Museum and as you look at it you think – the boys who gun the Dragsters are courageous, getting to 200 mph at the end of the strip, but Segrave had to hold this pace for a mile and then turn round and repeat the performance, in a 1,000 hp vehicle which was no odder than a modern drag-job but a good deal cruder and under-tyred.

When I was a schoolboy there was an exhibition for us, at which these great Land Speed giants were sometimes displayed – Babs, Bluebird and the like, accompanied by their masters, Parry Thomas, who liked children, Campbell, who didn't and maybe Cobb, the gentle fur-broker who was the first to top 400 mph on land. It was exciting beyond words. as if you were looking at a dinosaur or other prehistoric monster, for racing cars were pretty thin on the ground in those days. Now, with F1, F2, F3, Formula Ford, Formula Super V, Can-Am, F.5000 and all the rest of it, they are to be found round almost any street corner, and those who drive them are more prolific and consequently less famous than pop stars.

Perhaps that is some of the trouble. Motor racing spells money, for drivers, racing-car constructors and race organisers. Consequently, lots of people are riding on its bandwagon. Television gives you motor racing without the need to drive to a circuit. Some of the newspapers report Sunday's successes and retirements on Monday morning – although other media, as television, for instance, only tell you about it if there has been an accident, during the race. There are schools where you can learn to be a racing driver, the once-elusive art revealed to one and all, and there are racing car exhibitions up and down the country, where for the price of admission anyone can see the rubber-burning machinery and hob-nob with the chaps who tame it.

I am not saying the sport is poorer; it is certainly different. The first impact of those German Mercedes-Benz and Auto-Union racers (how unusual we thought the latter, because they were rear-engined!) when they came to sweep all before them in the Donington Grand Prix of 1937, will never fade from memory. They would look pathetically slow against the racers of 1971. But they still add up to the most powerful road-circuit cars ever built and drivers like Caracciola, Seaman, Nuvolari, Brauchitsch, Rosemeyer and Lang, who drove them at Hitler's bidding, had enormous problems in getting 600 hp onto the road through the tyres, suspension and over-steering habits then current.

Motor racing is as different from what it once was as the bathing girl of Edwardian days is from the bikini-wearing miss on our present seashores. Jarrott trailing a mile-long cloud of dust behind his 70 hp Panhard as he pressed on towards the ever-vanishing horizon . . . Count Zborowski waiting for his Palm Beach-attired friends to crank up Chitty-Chitty-Bang-Bang with a crow-bar in the Brooklands' paddock on a sleepy English Bank Holiday afternoon. Louis Chiron in a sky-blue, calico-tearing Bugatti on aluminium-spoked wheels in pursuit of Varzi over almost any French road-circuit. Fred Craner, Donington's clerk of the course, meeting Alfred Neubauer, racing manager of Mercedes-Benz, for the first time . . .

It was so different then. Different, but not necessarily better. I hope, however, that the GPDA will not ban too many of the older circuits, on the grounds that they are hazardous. The hazards make motor racing the game it is and have added the allure to its long and illustrious past. Different? Perhaps it's a matter of hats. When did you last see bowlers and trilbys worn to a motor race, and the drivers in berets and cloth helmets instead of crash-hats and spacemen bonedomes?